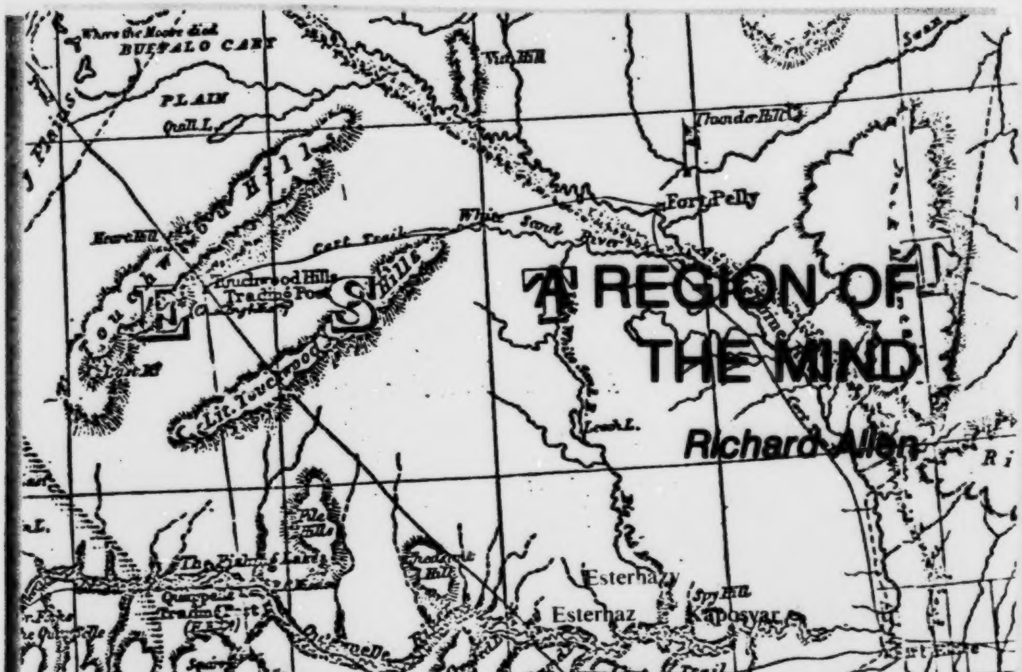
Where the Moose died
BUFFALO CART
PLAIN
Quill L.
Touchwood Hills
Touchwood Hills Trading Post
Lit. Touchwood Hills
Thunder Hill
Fort Pelly
White Sand River
Cart Trail
The Fishing Lakes
Qu'Appelle Trading Post
Qu'Appelle R.
Pile Hills
Wolf Hills
Esterhazy
Esterhaz
Kaposvar
Moose Mountain
THE GREAT PLAIN OF THE SOURIS
Souris River
Boundary between Canada and the United States

A REGION OF THE MIND

Richard Allen

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The Canadian Plains Research Center of the University of Regina has been created to foster a community of research and discourse in the field of Canadian Plains Studies and in particular:

a) to facilitate and encourage the interdisciplinary training of graduate students in Canadian Plains studies;

b) to conduct interdisciplinary seminars for faculty, staff, and students, and to call periodic consultations and conferences of those involved in advanced research in the area;

c) to develop a research collection in the area appropriate to the purposes of the Center, and to maintain and publish records of research in progress in the field;

d) to publish or facilitate the publication or republication of such materials as will promote the purposes of the Center and assist Canadian Plains studies at large;

e) to facilitate and encourage co-operation between all universities and research institutions engaged in Canadian Plains studies;

f) to act as a resource center for interdisciplinary research in the humanities, fine arts, and natural and social sciences, pertaining to the Canadian Plains area.

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A REGION OF THE MIND

A
REGION
OF
THE
MIND

INTERPRETING THE WESTERN CANADIAN PLAINS

edited
by

RICHARD ALLEN

CANADIAN PLAINS STUDIES ■ 1

CANADIAN PLAINS RESEARCH CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
1973

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Reprinted 1977

ISSN 0317-6290
ISBN 0-88977-008-5

Canadian Plains Research Center
University of Regina
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0A2

Printed and bound in Canada by Modern Press, Saskatoon.

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PREFACE

This collection of papers is an attempt to survey the course and current state of research in the humanities and social sciences into the western Canadian plains region. Most of the papers have grown out of ones originally presented to the Consultation on Canadian Plains Research held in Regina, April 29 - May 1, 1969, attended by one hundred scholars representing eighteen different institutions and a dozen disciplines. Several additional papers (those by Thomas, Kaye and Moodie, Lautt, McCourt and Morton) have been solicited to complement the others and fill out the field. Two of these (Morton and Thomas) have previously been published in a slightly abbreviated form in *Alberta History*, whose permission to republish is gratefully acknowledged. D. E. Smith's paper has since been published by the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, whose permission to republish is also gratefully acknowledged.

The book has been divided into three sections. In the first, John Archer has undertaken the almost impossible task of surveying the field of Canadian plains studies and establishing the essentially humanistic perspectives of the volume as a whole. In the second, a number of scholars have undertaken to review the plains research and writing (primarily the published work) within their disciplines. They have attempted not just a catalogue but an account of the development of research, the scholarly and secular influences that have played upon it, the conclusions reached, and the present state of plains studies in their respective fields. Every corpus of research has not been equally amenable to such an accounting, however, and each author has been free to apply those guidelines to his particular field as he saw fit. Finally, the third section includes three papers of an interpretive nature, each addressing a different problem, but each remarkably complementary to the others. John Bennett discusses the methods and conclusions of a precise study in cultural anthropology investigating the processes of social adaptation in southwestern Saskatchewan, while Eli Mandel explores the complementary process through the avenue of literature, namely the imaginative processes of endowing the prairie experience with meaning. W. L. Morton draws both approaches together in a suggestive historical and ecological interpretation of the plains region in the Canadian era.

A word about some omissions from the book. A paper by B. Y. Card on the development of the discipline of Sociology in prairie universities, presented to the consultation, has not been included. Despite its highly informative nature, it did not fit the perspectives of this volume, and is being published separately. Unfortunately, all efforts have failed to secure papers in Anthropology and Economics, respectively among the youngest and oldest disciplines to address themselves to the region. Anthropology would seem not to have developed a corpus of literature amenable to the purpose of this volume. Economics, however, is well past its regional innocence, and the reasons for its absence here are more complex. Economics was nurtured in the region by the common regional problems of wheat, transportation, and tariffs. Its interest in these problems, however, was pursued within a larger disciplinary devotion to economic history and a bias toward social reform, both of which were predicated on the proposition that social structures and values were at least heavily influenced by the dynamics of economic pursuits. A generation ago, a Britnell or a Fowke, working from that ground, would have relished the challenge of a paper for this collection, though their conclusions would now be an anachronistic. Since their time — indeed during their later years — economists, in the further pursuit of the systematics of their discipline, have moved on to solutions of regional problems that do not consort easily with concepts of regional uniqueness. The consequent desensitizing of sectors of the discipline to the larger question of regionalism, the decline of economic history as a study, along with the heavy involvement of many economists in the attack upon the problems of the region have evidently kept the discipline from reflecting on its own history vis-a-vis the prairie west. Hopefully, the historian of economic research into the region is even now somewhere gathering his sources.

However, economics is not alone with its problem respecting regionalism. Not the least interesting aspect of this collection of papers is its cumulative force in sketching the proportions of the debate on most disciplinary fronts over the academic validity of the concept of "region," and its applicability to the social and cultural phenomena of the Canadian plains. In some respects the debate would seem to have arisen as a result of both over-loose and over-strict usage of the term; in other respects, it reflects a larger conflict over alternative models which some devotees of a secular science have elevated as idols for exclusive worship; and in still other respects, the debate bears the marks of a latter day extension of the old realist-nominalist controversy in philosophy.

The first problem for the concept of a Canadian plains region arises from the customary recognition of the North American Great Plains as a single region. In face of the immensity of that geographical fact it is easy to forget that it, too, is a hypothesis, tested against a certain range of evidence, and whose powers of explanation have their limits. Clearly, the historical period on the Great Plains begins the addition of a range of evidence not easily assimilated to a simple geographical regionalism. Economists, political scientists and historians have found a Canadian plains region a useful hypothesis, and geographers also have discerned numerous significant cultural differences coinciding with a boundary roughly marking the divide between the Great Plains waters flowing south and those flowing north and east. Even archaeologists and prehistorians, suggests Pohorecky, can find a certain appropriateness in what at first glance seems a "political-geological bastard."

A second, more difficult problem, is that few of the mental constructs used to make sense of the Canadian plains have been born in the region. That does not necessarily invalidate them. Indeed, where would our understanding be without a free currency in ideas. But a free currency in ideas has never carried with it the obligation of uncritical acceptance, and it may be that a too ready application of borrowed concepts has distorted the perception of regional characteristics, much as the attire worn at a Regina Buffalo Days festival discolours the history of the Saskatchewan past. For instance, that Sociology has not yet tackled the problem of a regional sociology head-on, Lautt suggests, is largely a result of the importation of sociologists and a sociology nurtured in a tradition inappropriate to the Canadian plains, and devoted to models of modernization and industrialization derived elsewhere.

Few discreet empirical studies have yet been done in the Canadian plains region to reveal the extent of intra-regional socio-cultural unity or inter-regional differentiation, but what is intriguing in some of the papers is a sense of urgency that, quite apart from empirical validity, the task of regional definition be taken up in their respective disciplines. The observation is neither mischievous nor inappropriate. Many more studies like Bennett's work recounted below demonstrating the relationship between environmental challenge and life-styles in south-western Saskatchewan are needed. To see 'regional man' at work, however, suggests Mandel, is not just to see him responding to environmental influences, but it is to observe him searching for a structure of meaning. Prairie literature, he says, is characterized by a "mythicized geography" arising from the elemental needs of the human mind. Realism, after all, is one among other intellectual traditions, and all the empirical studies of prairie phenomena will not change that. Rather, they are, for that very reason, necessary. Not only in the perceptions of the literary imagination and in the realm of reviews of research, but also in empirical study itself, a region is a mental construct, and the data has not all been considered until the prairie sociologist or geographer, like the prairie poet, looks within himself. Wherever we turn in approaching the many facets of the subject of this book, we are in a region of the mind — and so it has been titled.

It may be some support to Mandel's theory to note the emotional attachment of Canadians, scholars among them, to the term "prairies"; Canadians are supposed to have "prairies" and Americans, "plains." However, as Kaye and Moodie point out, the region has been assaulted by a plethora of names: the West, the prairie West, the Prairies, the prairie parkland region, the prairie provinces, the Western Interior, the northern Great Plains, the Canadian Plains, the western Canadian Plains. There has been no attempt in this volume to rigidly sort out usage, but each term has rather different connotations and therefore differences in application which must be respected. The most positive term which gathers most of them into a regional mould, even while holding them in a certain tension, would seem to be the "Canadian Plains." "Prairies" can still apply to the grassland ecology, to the historic area of the settlement period and, for convenience, to the provinces which arose out of it, but the term "plains" has a more comprehensive application which, in this volume, is most fully articulated in the paper, "Geographical Perspectives on the Canadian Plains," by Kaye and Moodie.

It should be added that those who wish to begin their reading with a comprehensive introduction to the region as such should begin with the second part of Pohorecky's paper on the pre-history of Saskatchewan, continue with Kaye and Moodie, and conclude with W. L. Morton, "A Century of Plain and Parkland." Thus fortified, the rest of the volume may take on a less formidible aspect.

The contributors to this collection represent a variety of universities both within and outside the region. They range from outstanding veterans of scholarship to those who are just cutting their scholarly teeth. Together their papers have a force unanticipated in the beginning, and it is my pleasure as editor to acknowledge the willingness with which they have participated in this venture and the thoroughness and thoughtfulness with which they have pursued it to the end, suffering all editorial idiosyncrasies with good grace. Acknowledgement must also be made of the assistance of Miss Marylin Bickford who saw most of the manuscript through its various stages of preparation. The permission of Aldine Publishers to reprint most of the diagrams accompanying J. W. Bennett's article is gratefully acknowledged. The volume is published by the Canadian Plains Studies Centre in the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, which is slowly gathering its resources for fostering a community of research and discourse on the subject matter of the Canadian plains. The very initiation of the work however, was made possible by grants from the Canada Council and the University in support of the research consultation for which several of the papers were originally prepared.

Richard Allen,
Regina, Sask.,
June, 1973.

INTRODUCTION

1

RESOURCES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR CANADIAN PLAINS RESEARCH

J. H. ARCHER

One of the most common complaints heard in these days of "exploding knowledge" is the charge that there is a lack of synthesis in modern thinking. There is a wide gulf, so we are told, between the scientific and the humanistic approach in life. Indeed, there is a notable difference today between the relative pessimism of the humanists and the relative optimism of the scientists. It is as if the latter felt that all things were now possible in the hand of the scientist—and the former feared that this was indeed true. There is, if not a gulf between us, at least a disarray within ourselves. An historian, E. L. Woodward, put it this way, and I paraphrase his words. We are in confusion because our method of approach to understanding must be through the intellect. The scientific method is the best instrument which our intellect has devised, but we know that the results thus far obtained do not ultimately make sense. Yet, we cannot explain why they do not make sense. The scientific method has helped us search for the right things, in the right way, but somehow, somewhere we have missed the point. Human beings, in investigating the universe, are like cats and dogs in a library. They miss the point of the place and are infinitely unaware of missing it. That is Woodward's view. Certainly it suggests a disarray.

This paper is not intended to tackle the universe. Its subject, however, involves the engineer, the natural scientist, the social scientist, the geologist, the meteorologist, the historian, and the theologian, and if we can find some common elements in various sources of knowledge, perhaps we can forge a unity of social and scientific activities on a smaller plane. In so doing, let us do it within the disciplines of knowledge. Each discipline is, in itself, a community of discourse, a company of scholars and students. Every student is worthy of an encounter with the various disciplines. What we are seeking is a unity of diversities, a framework to contain this variety.

Any introduction to research in the Canadian plains area should take cognizance of the prime elements—the prime facts of existence. These are the earth, the air, the climate, and the rocks, minerals and waters under the earth. There are some excellent general sources for

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reference. The descriptions of township and section surveys carried out by the federal authority and published as sessional papers during the eighties and nineties is one such. The mapping of the area was done later and the mapping techniques are constantly improved. Together with weather maps and records, information gained by seismograph and corings, archaeological digs, mining assays reports, and similar sources, these constitute a significant if general mass of factual data available to the researcher.

We are beginning to use it, and use will accelerate as more and more information becomes available. We are, for example, beginning to understand climatological changes, and the far-reaching effects of volcanic eruptions on the upper atmosphere and of earthquakes under the ocean on ocean currents. We can predict weather in the limited sense, but not by season. We are bold enough to study the aurora borealis—and rude enough, here in the West, and at Toronto and at Guelph, to study snow and ice hydrology and the effect of snow on animal life. Some adventurous scientists have gone further and are conducting studies on the effect of winter on prairie man. It is natural and it is fitting that man, once having satisfied immediate physical needs should turn to a study of his environment, at the same time he is driven by a compulsion to learn what lies beyond that distant horizon.

The Canadian plains region is a fruitful research laboratory for the geographer, the geomorphologist, and the archaeologist. With the Rockies to the west, the Canadian Shield to the north and east, and the American plains to the south there is great potential for local, regional and comparative research. Up to this point, research undertaken and information garnered has been put to practical use in wide-ranging studies of soil erosion. With these have gone studies in irrigation and water resources. Much of the research done is, quite understandably, closely linked to the needs and welfare of the human animal who inhabits the plains. Until recently archaeology has lagged, for in our arrogance we westerners have thought to learn little useful from digging into the past.

How quickly we relate science to our welfare. Yet this is but natural. The compulsion of the pioneer has been to devise a machine that would do the labour of a dozen hands. It is with the study of the first human inhabitants of the area, however, that the social scientist becomes deeply involved. He it is who forces us to look back of the homestead era to the Indian civilization.

There is considerable work being done here at prairie universities and elsewhere in Canada and the United States on Indian life. Historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and archaeologists are pressing research on Indian society, tribal patterns, language, and military arts. The frontiers of our knowledge are being pushed back into pre-history. At the same time a modest effort is being made to gather and record the lore and the legends, the artistic work of the Indian. With this has gone a much more concerted effort to amass written and printed materials about the Indian. Unfortunately for the white man and for the Indian, the government reports, the missionary records, the travellers diaries, the company man's ledger are paternalistic or patronizing. The children's books about Indians are much freer of this taint than are adult works. Probably archaeological digs, Indian artifacts, and oral tapings are the safest guides to an understanding of the Indian culture.

With the coming of the white man, we enter into an era where the abundance of records must delight the social scientist. There are written diaries, published journals, company records and government reports. Explorers, fur traders, missionaries, travellers, surveyors, map-makers, government officials, business concerns created and kept records. Then came the newspaper editor, the railwayman, the homesteader, the lawyer, and the civil servant. We can only be everlastingly grateful that thereafter came the archivist. And with the maturing social responsibility that brought this last specimen came also the writer, the artist, the film maker, and the musician.

The white man has a tradition as a record maker. We can be thankful for it. One has but to reflect on the extent of Hudson's Bay Company Archives, the C.P.R. Archives, the homestead files in the Saskatchewan Archives, and the court records in various storage places in the West to realize what unlimited range there is for the social scientist today. With it all came the census taker and the statistician to put some quantitative measurement on various activities.

There are various centres in Canada where Canadian Studies as a grouping comprises a significant core program. Dalhousie emphasizes history and concentrates one course on Nova Scotian history. Moncton University and Laval accent French Canadian history and literature. McGill has a French Canada Institute. The University of Toronto has departments strongly emphasizing Canadian history, politics, and sociology. Both Toronto and the University of Western Ontario give courses in Ontario history. Carleton University has an active Institute of Canadian Studies, an inter-disciplinary institute encompassing history, law, economics, politics, anthropology, sociology, geography, and journalism. The Institute sponsors the Carleton Library series. The University of Guelph offers courses in Canadian geography, history, politics, and urban development. The University of Waterloo offers an interesting regional approach to Canadian history. Queen's has a strong Canadian Studies program accenting history, politics, literature, and local government.

What then of courses specifically offered on western Canada? There is the recently initiated Canadian Plains Area Study Program offered in Regina. Courses on the West are offered in Edmonton. The University of Victoria offers an undergraduate third year course and a graduate course in history on the Canadian West. The University of Guelpn offers an undergraduate history course on western Canada. This is a one-semester course or one-half class. Toronto offers a one-semester course. Queen's offers a second year honours seminar course on Western Canadian History. More of that anon.

The significance of this scattered, though rising interest in the Canadian West or Canadian plains area, is not that it is scattered—but that it exists, and is increasing. Two decades ago the search for evidence of such interest would have been in vain. When I attended the University of Saskatchewan immediately after 1945, I could not help forming the impression that very few history departments, and few professors, really believed that western Canadian history was a proper field for historical enquiry. My much respected mentor, the late Professor G. W. Simpson, was one exception. He did encourage interest in local and regional history, and he did take steps to see that research materials were gathered. No doubt he was in turn inspired by the works of Arthur S. Morton, who did so much to encourage the founding of a provincial archival institution in Saskatchewan. Professor Morton's interests in fur-trade history and western history are well-known. Surely he was the first historian in Saskatchewan to promote the teaching of western Canadian history. For all that, during the years when I was Provincial Archivist of Saskatchewan I had the distinct impression that the greatest interest, and the majority of researchers doing work on the West, came from the American Mid-West.

There is a marked change in thinking today. Much more work is going into local history, ethnic studies, political papers. Research is now being carried on in such sophisticated fields as urban morphology, and urban and regional planning. Part of the reason for this marked change lies in the availability of research resources today. Part of the reason lies in new approaches to the study of society. Part of the reason lies more directly in a changing emphasis in the study and teaching of social sciences, and a broadening out into economic, social, and intellectual history. Finally, there is a keen interest in research into regionalism in Canada.

Before coming back to the prairies, however, it would be useful and informative to survey the various concentrations of resources that exist, pertinent to a wide ranging and intensive program of studies on the Canadian plains. One should keep in mind that resources may mean books, newspapers, documents, manuscripts, artifacts, geologic items, laboratory reports, and maps.

In the broad field of Agriculture there is a wealth of resources. The various research centres and Experimental Stations operated by the federal authority provide a total holding of more than half a million items pertinent to this region. Provincial libraries and provincial Departments of Agriculture offer a significant additional resource. The prairie universities, the University of Guelph, and Macdonald College of McGill University provide specialized resources for further study.

There are no very strong collections on Anthropology in the West, though I am aware that library resources are growing rapidly. The National Museum in Ottawa and the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto have much to offer. The University of Toronto and McGill have strong anthropological collections. The Buller Memorial Library in Winnipeg is strong in mycology and plant pathology. The University of Alberta has a good geological library and a good background collection in entymology. The Arctic Institute at McGill has a fine library on the North.

There are other specialized resources not found in government offices or in university libraries. The various church archives and particularly those of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, United Church, Presbyterian and Baptist Churches contain much on missionary work, welfare efforts, and social records of the prairie region. Churches of the Orthodox faith, and particularly those pertaining to Ukrainian communities, have considerable archival resources. The various collections of court records, and particularly the mass gathered in by the Saskatchewan Archives, provide an invaluable source for research into the social and economic life of the province. Finally, there are business records. I need not enlarge on the importance of bank records, insurance company records, the records of the co-operative, the implement companies, the transportation companies, the mail order department stores, the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, and the various grain elevator companies.

There are notable collections of Canadiana—books, pamphlets, documents, newspapers and manuscripts—formally gathered and maintained as research collections in libraries. Two of the strongest of these are outside of Canada, in the New York Public Library and Harvard University. In Canada, collections which accent western material exist at McGill (the Arkin and Lande collections), at the University of Toronto and at the Toronto Public Library, at the Library of Parliament, the library of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, the Shortt Library at Saskatoon, the Provincial Library of Manitoba, the Provincial Library of British Columbia, the North West Collection in the Vancouver Public Library, and the Buchanan Collection in Lethbridge, and the library of the Glenbow Foundation. There are smaller, yet significant, rather specialized working collections in Winnipeg, Regina, and Edmonton in museums, archival institutions and special libraries.

When one adds to the above the considerable archival resources that exist, the overall picture becomes bright with possibilities. A guide to these resources, the Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories, has recently been published. It lists the considerable resources pertinent to research on the plains region, held in the Public Archives of Canada, the Manitoba Archives, the Saskatchewan Archives, the British Columbia Archives, the Glenbow Library, and Queen's University. These institutions house historical and literary papers, personal and business papers, church records, and a variety of miscellaneous papers all of interest to the social sciences. The *Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories* is a comprehensive list but it does not cover all collections. An example of some pertinent collections not found therein is the collection of Home Bank records now at Waterloo University. The Home Bank had branch offices throughout the prairies and had close financial relations with the Grain Growers Grain Company.

I have recently completed a five year study on Canadian archival institutions, and have had much to do with resources of research libraries in Canada. My own personal estimate of the breadth and depth of sources for research on the Canadian plains area, while rough and ready, is not totally uninformed. I think that the present resources in archaeology, anthropology, climatology, geography, and geology will easily carry work at the master's level, with certain specific areas able to carry a higher level. There are sufficient resources to carry doctoral programs in agrology, entymology, history, political science, Canadian literature, sociology, and economics. There is a wide range of topics which transcend subject borders—Indian society, Métis society, business history, urbanization, co-operation, labour movements, the depression, fine arts, transportation, religion.

There has been, over the past few years, a marked increase in the number of students and scholars in the social sciences doing work on this prairie region. At such centres as Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Toronto, Kingston and London work has been done or is in progress on T. A. Crerar, J. G. Gardiner, Angus McInnis, N. F. Davin, C. A. Dunning and Walter Scott. These have been accepted on such other topics as the Grain Growers' Export Company, the Saskatcewan Power Corporation, Labour, Medicare, Farmers Movements, Indians, local history, development of governmental bodies, the Wheat Board, and so on. There are still many fields awaiting further research.

Obviously one should not overlook the great things done and the reputations made at private universities in such fields as chemistry, physics and pure mathematics. It would be short-sighted, indeed, not to acknowledge that work in the bio-chemistry, engineering, architecture, genetics, and so on, is of direct interest not only to the social scientist, but also to the humanist. The humanist is directly concerned with the work of those of his colleagues who do research in building materials, or building design, or road-making, or cement, or insect control, or who propagate new strains of wheat. Surely the humanist must know prehistory, the record of the rocks, flora and fauna, zoology, anthropology, and psychiatry.

Archaeological work needs much more attention and should not be pressed in the crisis condition of the past few years. Anthropology has only made a beginning. The study of water resources, conservation, and the use of chemicals in weed and pest control have obvious, practical application. Much more attention must be paid to man's housing needs and his recreational needs. Probably all of the above will gain governmental support because of their direct relationship to society's welfare.

But there are other fields not so directly concerned with the economic life of the area, which call for cultivation. Much more work can be done in the study of the early history and developing society of the Indian—and his struggle to adjust to the acid of the imposed culture of the white man. The Métis nation continues to attract the interest of historian and political scientist. We need a full work on the Cattle Kingdom, Canadian edition, and the continuing interchange of a rangeman's society with an agricultural society. The survey system and the homestead policy adopted imposed a pattern of settlement on the prairies. Was this the best possible pattern? Van Horne did not think so. How much better would have been an adaptation of the river lot system, or European village system? What costs did pioneers pay in isolation, hardship, transportation difficulties, inadequate water supplies imposed by a dispersive policy? How much of this can be accounted a root cause of rural-urban tensions in a frontier society?

In a slightly different line of endeavour, may I suggest that the history of farm associations be related to the sociological as distinct from the political and economic forces of the day. To what extent were American settlers prime movers in early associations? Was the ethnic make-up of the homesteading society a disruptive or a cohesive factor. In the light of new material now available there is need for a new look at the Progressives in western Canada—and I am reminded that such a new look is being taken into the United Farmers of Ontario movement. While we have several historical urban studies there is no overall view of the growth of urban centres in the Canadian plains region. Does the state of political writings indicate a rising regional protest, or maturing political awareness?

While we are looking generally at a frontier society facing stern obstacles in a stern environment, let us look specifically at certain aspects. How much do we know of the economics of transportation in the area? Business history is a perfectly respectable topic. The T. Eaton Company catalogue was almost a Bible to the homesteader's family. Immigrants from continental Europe learned English from its pages. What impact did this great company have on society? To me it has seemed almost more effective than the public school system in providing a unifying national theme in early days. Surely the Watkin's and Rawleigh companies provide entries to a study of rural and small town society. The whole history of housing, and with it the history of materials used in housing, awaits further research. The Winnipeg Grain Exchange, the Sifton newspapers, the wheat pools are obvious topics for theses.

There remain the realms of the political scientist, the sociologist, and the artist. Politics have been almost an obsession in the prairies. Quantitatively, qualitatively, querulously, politics is a stable of frontier diet. There is scope for the history of political leaders, political parties, political ideas. The sociologist may be interested in the impact of a university on an urban centre situated in an agricultural hinterland, and on the agricultural society itself. He may wish to study the influence of the Chautauqua movement on the prairie frontier, the effectiveness of prohibition, and the strength of the temperance movement. In the fields of literature, drama, art, music, there is still much to be done on origins and traditions before any meaningful assessment of distinguishing characteristics and qualities can be made. Nevertheless, there is a healthy development of native or indigenous literature, art and theatre.

From the foregoing it is evident that there are areas calling for research. The question arises as to what form or method such research might take. My own view, admittedly the view of an amateur, is that it would be most fruitful to pursue further research through selected comparative studies on a broad plain and, at the same, to carry on specific studies in depth. The last word has not been said on the influence of the frontier on American or Canadian history. But for the present let us go further afield. Is there any basis for comparison between the society and the economy of the Ukraine and that of the Canadian prairie west? Can one compare the treatment accorded the Canadian Indian on the prairies to that accorded his American counterpart? Is there anything to be learned from a comparison of the so-called American "melting-pot" and the Canadian "mosaic"? How much influence did the old National Policy have on western internationalism? Many other fields offer themselves for comparative studies—transportation, urbanization, evolution of government, agrarian radicalism, labour movements, law and order, governmental influence on educational policies, and on health services.

In the selected area preparatory work has been done here to provide "in depth" resources. It has been the policy of the Saskatchewan Archives, this past decade or more, to attempt a concentration of resources on a regional basis. Such concentrations include homestead files, provincial and municipal records, school records, court records, newspapers, maps, the records of local businesses, societies and individuals. It is obvious that, together with the resources of the archives, there exists, for selected centres at least, sufficient resources for studies in depth. It might be useful to add dimensions to such research by doing comparative studies between such centres and regional centres elsewhere in Canada, or in the United States. Such comparisons could encompass the widest range of human activities.

In the light of the resouces available for research, then, and the interest evident in the range of studies developing a focus on the plains area, the time is ripe for a co-ordinated umbrella institute program encompassing various disciplines and separate institutions. Can one foresee the day when the Canadian Plains Studies Centre might co-ordinate inter-campus programs of study for undergraduates and graduates, but within the standards and disciplines rightly set by sponsoring universities. There would be problems of co-ordinating programs and evaluating standards. There would have to be a core of studies and clear understanding of responsibility. If this can be done then a student might start his studies in one prairie university and continue at another where the research resources were more appropriate to his developing program. Exchange professors might move among the various universities of the region. This arrangement could go further. Could not a student, in his graduate years, go abroad—even to eastern Canada, to Queen's, attached, as it were, for duty and rations to that fine institution, yet still fulfilling the necessary prerequisites for a degree from the home university.

One of the first projects of such a centre should be the gathering and listing of all theses, papers and research projects having a bearing on the Canadian plains. Thereafter would come a union list of resources available for further work on the region. With this information to hand a co-ordinated program based on a mutually beneficial allocation of fields and projects might be devised to serve the convenience and the aspirations of students and of faculty. Canada Council and the National Research Council and other bodies have been generous in their support of programs. They seek to build on strength and they are impressed by serious intent and purpose.

There is one danger to guard against. Administrators, governors, even faculty, sometimes consider that a university is not truly respectable unless it offers a wide spectrum of courses. As a consequence growth is unplanned, existing resources are spread too thinly, and the future becomes mortgaged to the past. Institutional pride is a fine thing; let it be firmly based on the high quality of work done in fields in which the institution is best qualified to operate.

In this same vein be it said—no man, today, can master all fields of knowledge. But the age of narrow specialization is also going. Good riddance, for it has hampered human development. It has produced the innumerate humanist and the illiterate scientist, both equally ill at ease and out of place in modern life. Joint honours courses and courses involving fields of study are today vastly popular. To quote a British trade unionist (with some changes), "The man who cannot ride two blankety horses doesn't deserve a job in the blooming circus."

It is not surprising that research first done at universities in the prairie region was in the pure and applied sciences. Faculty members were from outside and they pursued lines of research to which they were accustomed. At the same time, prairie universities were closely programmed to give aid and direction to farmers, stockmen, road makers, and professional people. Quite naturally, research projects in these practical applications received support. Only latterly has there been time, money, and inspiration to undertake the more reflective, more intuitive work of doing research into social relationships. Yet this area of human relations is the most important, probably, for unless we can learn to live together it may well be that we run a race, a race between the external power of nuclear fission and the internal dynamic of human frustration, as to which will destroy society as we know it.

This Canadian plains region is a prime research area for the social scientist. Here the researcher can get a broad view of a young society developing, and at the same time he can get a bird's eye view of the historical progress of man. There is a pressing need for further research that we may understand ourselves. There is a prime danger that we may give up the initiative and drift as the buffetings of events send us.

I am not really fearful of this happening. I fear sometimes that those in a hurry may harm the thing they would improve, but this region has ever been in a hurry. This vast Canadian region is not likely to succumb to isolationism or dictatorship. Complacency is a danger and surely we were never too humble. But there is a proper place for a proper pride. We may forget that Lake Winnipeg is larger than Lake Ontario. We may forget that both Great Bear Lake and Great Slave Lake exceed Lake Erie in extent. We need not remember that the prairie provinces have more miles of provincial highway than all the rest of Canada. We should remember, however, that it was the successful settling of the Canadian West that made the Canadian dream "a mari usque ad mare" come true. This region has never worn the tight-lipped, narrow, forced air of superiority to all things American known to an earlier Canada. In the physical sense the westerners have done great things. The golden, optimistic, buoyant sense of accomplishment has not died. New plans of research, of programs of studies, of centres should be baptized with that spirit. They require wings, not fetters, nor the burden of over-practicality. A man of letters, Peter Blois, wrote some time ago:

> What does it profit a student to spend his days in these things which neither in the army, nor at home, nor in business, nor in the cloister, nor in politics, nor in the church, nor anywhere else are good to anyone—except in the Schools.

A little archaic, perhaps, and a little episcopal—after all it was written in the year 1200 A.D. Peter Blois was a drop-out from a monastery, a man of letters who survived the *real politik* of mediaeval times. His impatience with the limited horizons of his day is not altogether out of place today. We are bound to society it is true, for no man is an island unto himself—but neither is he a witless leaf blowing in the wind.

REVIEWS OF RESEARCH

2

GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CANADIAN PLAINS

B. KAYE and D. W. MOODIE

The Canadian plains, more than any other settled region of Canada, have been associated with a plethora of regional names. Although all of these names shed some light upon the character of the plains, they complicate the task of ascribing territorial bounds to regional studies. Despite their interest in defining and classifying areal units, geographers have shown little interest in standardizing the nomenclature of the Canadian plains. This apparent confusion has stemmed from the practical advantages of devising different regions for different purposes. Geographical studies based upon political units, for example, have obvious advantages, but do not correspond with regions defined on the basis of their physical and cultural characteristics. Different criteria, in consequence, have spawned a multitude of toponyms related to the region. They embrace a variety of distinct and often overlapping geographical regions that include all of, or part of, the settled portions of the Canadian plains.

Initially, the area comprising the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta was part of the "North-West," a term applied to the great fur region north and west of Lake Superior. It was used to distinguish this region from the area southwest of Lake Michigan where, following the American Revolution, the fur trade was abandoned for the more lucrative trade to the north and west. Although its boundaries are difficult to define, the North-West for almost a century called up a vision of one of the greatest fur regions of the world, and was most strongly associated with the extensive belt of forest which stretches northwestward from near the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains. In the late nineteenth century, however, the term more closely connoted the grassland to the south and evoked an image of spacious plains rapidly succumbing to the plough of the homesteader.[1] Subsequently, the term has migrated to the Mackenzie and Yukon basins. The geographically illogical names "Prairie Provinces" and "Western Canada" are now widely used to denote the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Theoretically, Western Canada includes British Columbia, while prairie comprises only a very small part of the three provinces. In an attempt to provide more accurate terminology, geographers have introduced terms such as "The Western Interior of Canada"[2] and "ALSAMA"[3] to designate these three provinces. The term Western Interior of Canada is used in this context by the authors.

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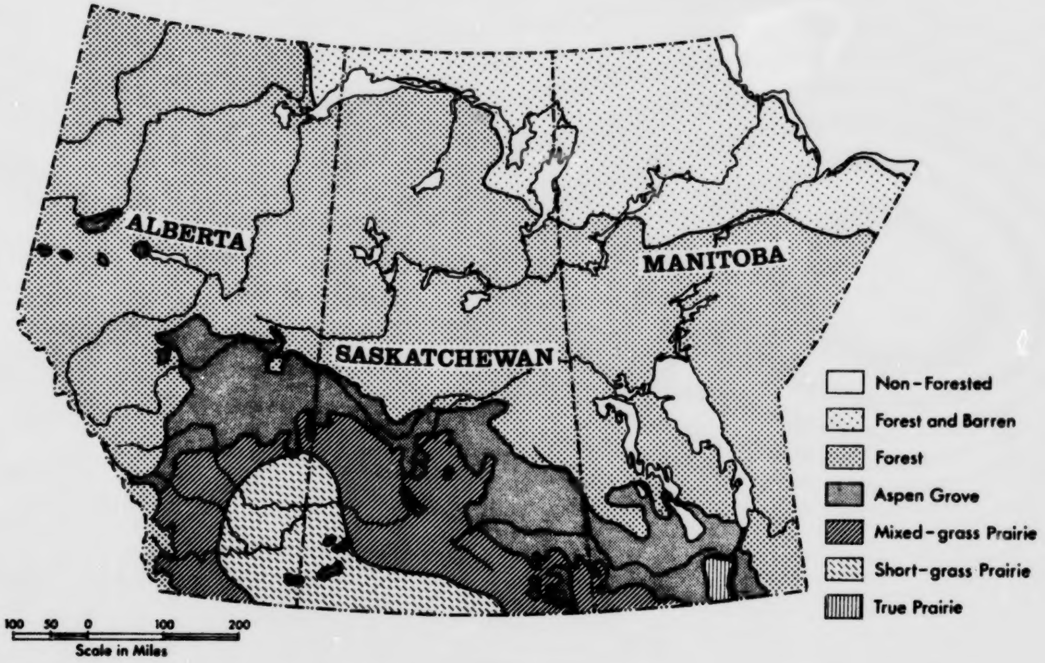
A wider variety of terms has been applied to the settled part of these provinces, including "Southern Prairies," "Canadian Great Plains," "Prairie West," "Ouest Authentique" and "Prairie Region." In this chapter the terms Canadian plains and northern plains are used synonymously with the term prairie-parkland region. All three terms are meant to refer only to the area of the three provinces that is continuously settled at present.

PHYSICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE NORTHERN PLAINS

In 1690 Henry Kelsey of the Hudson's Bay Company became the first European to view and record his impressions of the Canadian plains. Although Kelsey learned little of the nature and extent of the interior plains, it is interesting to note that he described the prairie as "barren ground." In so doing, Kelsey gave birth to what Wreford Watson has called the illusion of a western wasteland. He was the first to apply a mental equation which in Watson's words, ran as follows; "bareness equals barrenness equals infertility equals uselessness for agriculture."[4] Kelsey and later observers, all of whom first encountered the prairie after seemingly endless days of travel through the "thickwood," or forest-clad, northern and eastern approaches to the Canadian plains, were immediately struck by the treeless nature of the landscape. This novel characteristic of the plains prompted the misconception that land which would not grow trees was infertile. Having left the parkland behind him, Kelsey recorded the following: "pitcht to ye outtermost Edge of ye woods, this plain affords Nothing but short Round sticky grass & Buffillo . . . ."[5] This negative view of the prairie runs as a common thread through the history of the evaluation of grassland environments in North America and, in Canada, persisted into the period of pioneer settlement. As late as 1882, John Macoun observed that "the dweller in Ontario feels that to be out of sight of woods is a calamity. He also believes that land covered with forest is NEW and therefore richer than the prairie, and rejects the latter and takes to brush and forest."[6]

This ecological interpretation of the plains begun by Kelsey was given almost full exposition by David Thompson more than a century later. Thompson, to whom credit must be given for the earliest regional accounts of western Canada,[7] was the first of the fur trader-explorers to describe the plains in continental perspective: "These Great Plains may be said to commence at the north side of the Gulph of Mexico, and extend northward to the latitude fifty four degrees; where these plains are bounded by the Forests of the north . . . ."[8] Thompson also took a negative view of the agricultural potential of the grasslands. "The whole of this country may be pastoral, but except in a few places, cannot become agricultural. . . . These great Plains appear to be given by Providence to the Red Men for ever, as the wilds and sands of Africa are given to the Arabians."[9]

VEGETATION REGIONS OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES



ALBERTA
SASKATCHEWAN
MANITOBA
Non-Forested
Forest and Barren
Forest
Aspen Grove
Mixed-grass Prairie
Short-grass Prairie
True Prairie
100 50 0 100 200
Scale in Miles

Among the fur traders, the plains came to be seen as an ecological entity which Thompson was the first to recognize as roughly coincident with the grassland environment of the continental interior. Throughout this continental region, grassland vegetation is coextensive with plains topography. Although the plains topography of the continental interior in fact extends to the Mackenzie delta, or far beyond the northern boundary of the grasslands, the coincidence of landform and vegetation throughout the Great Plains as defined by Thompson served to further emphasize the physical homogeneity of a region whose unity was first perceived in terms of its flora. The essential sameness of the salient physical features of the Great Plains also ensured considerable uniformity in the Indian occupance of the region. As a result, the fur traders recognized few differences between the Canadian prairie-parkland and the lands to the south, either in terms of the physical nature of these lands or their inhabitants.

Once the extent to the plains had been established, there remained the task of describing and interpreting the physical characteristics of the northern or Canadian section of the continental region. This was in large degree accomplished by the Canadian and British government exploring expeditions led respectively by Henry Youle Hind and Captain John Palliser in the late 1850's. One of the major objectives of the expeditions was to ascertain the potential for agricultural settlement of these western lands. It is from these evaluations that later interpretations of the physical character of the region derive. In Warkentin's opinion, "It is not too much to say that the reports written by the members of the Palliser and Hind-Dawson expeditions laid the basic conceptual framework for our present interpretation of the physical geography of Western Interior Canada."[10]

The most fundamental achievement of these men was to introduce a topographic interpretation of the Canadian plains. From the detailed scientific information amassed by the expeditions, the topography of the prairie-parkland was reduced to a threefold system of plains and scarps. Known as the three prairie levels or steppes, they are separated one from the other by the rough salients of the Manitoba Escarpment and the Missouri Coteau. This division of the West into landform units has "since been a central theme for all geographical writing on the Western Interior of Canada."[11]

The second major generalization to emerge from the observations of the expeditions proved more controversial and sparked considerable debate on a subject which is still contentious. This was a division of the Western Interior into zones of agriculture potential. They comprised a forest zone, an intermediate "fertile belt", and an arid district later known as Palliser's Triangle. The fertile belt was coincident with the parkland and the adjacent tall grass prairie, and was considered well suited for agricultural settlement. It was flanked to the north by the unattractive southern margins of the boreal forest, and to the south by a dry zone characterized by mixed-grass and short grass prairie. The latter, which was thought to comprise the northermost thrust of the Great American Desert, was deemed entirely unsuited to arable agriculture.

Although later assessments of the agricultural resource have resulted in refinements to this classification, these divisions, based primarily upon palpable indicators of climatic variation and not upon assumed relationships between tree growth and soil fertility, still effectively adumbrate real differences in the agricultural qualities of the region. The fertile belt has proven to be the most stable zone of agricultural occupance in the Western Interior of Canada. The southern edge of the boreal forest is still, in effect, the northern boundary of continuous agricultural settlement. The sub-humid lands of Palliser's Triangle, in contrast, have had a chequered history of agricultural advance and retreat. Although the outer margins of the triangle are now closely settled, this has been accomplished with difficulty and was achieved only with the development and application of techniques of dryland farming and irrigation.

GENESIS OF THE REGION

By the time of the transfer of Rupert's Land to the Dominion of Canada in 1870, the essential features of the physical geography of the Canadian plains had been delineated. During the almost two centuries of travel and exploration that preceded the transfer, gradual accretions of geographical knowledge culminated in the view that the Canadian plains were but a physical extension of the American Great Plains. However, within the vast compass of the plains environment, there are important differences in the intra-regional connections of the major waterways. These were not without significance to the fur trade, which dominated the economic life of the region during the first two centuries of its history. With the minor exception of small areas in the southwest that comprise part of Gulf of Mexico drainage, the Canadian prairie-parkland is crossed by rivers that drain northeastward into Hudson Bay. The watershed between Gulf of Mexico and Hudson Bay drainage is almost imperceptible in the landscape, yet it prescribed the locus of British commercial and political interests in the interior plains of the continent. Although accidental, it is nonetheless important that, as it crosses the plains, the Forty-Ninth Parallel coincides throughout most of its length with the divide between these two drainage systems. Harold Innis was the first to postulate that the geographical expression of the Canadian state is in large measure the area of water transport systems that proved of greatest efficiency during the fur trade era.[12] Nowhere is this more evident than along the Forty-Ninth Parallel between the Lake of the Woods and the Rocky Mountains.

For two hundred years, the British fur trade in North America depended upon the river connections between the coastal factories on Hudson Bay and the fur forest of the upland interior. The prairie-parkland rivers were the farthest reaching tentacles of the Hudson's Bay Company's water-borne trade and, as such, circumscribed the southern boundary of Rupert's Land. These same rivers comprised the southernmost lines of communication of the St. Lawrence based trade in the course of its east-west expansion into the continental interior. Although their basins were quickly depleted of furs, the rivers of the plains ran through the grazing ground of the buffalo, and carried the pemmican that provisioned and maintained the forest trade. The food staple of the northern grassland was linked to the fur staple of the northern forest in an economic union which, even prior to the delimitation of the British-American boundary in 1818, had severed the northern plains from those to the south.

As a result, the fur trade exploitation of the Western Interior generated a north-south linkage of economic complementarity that persisted until the period of agricultural settlement. Founded in the vanguard of such settlement, the Red River Colony looked to the fur trade as the only market for its surplus products. Colonial pemmican and farm produce were transported in boat brigades to the far flung trading posts of the forest North-West. The creation of the first agricultural settlement in the Western Interior strengthened the role of the prairie-parkland as commissariat to the forest trade. The southern frontier of this regional commissary coincided with the international boundary. Although drawn largely in ignorance of the land, the Forty-Ninth Parallel accorded political recognition to what was, in effect, a physiographical, historical and economic divide across the interior grassland.[13]

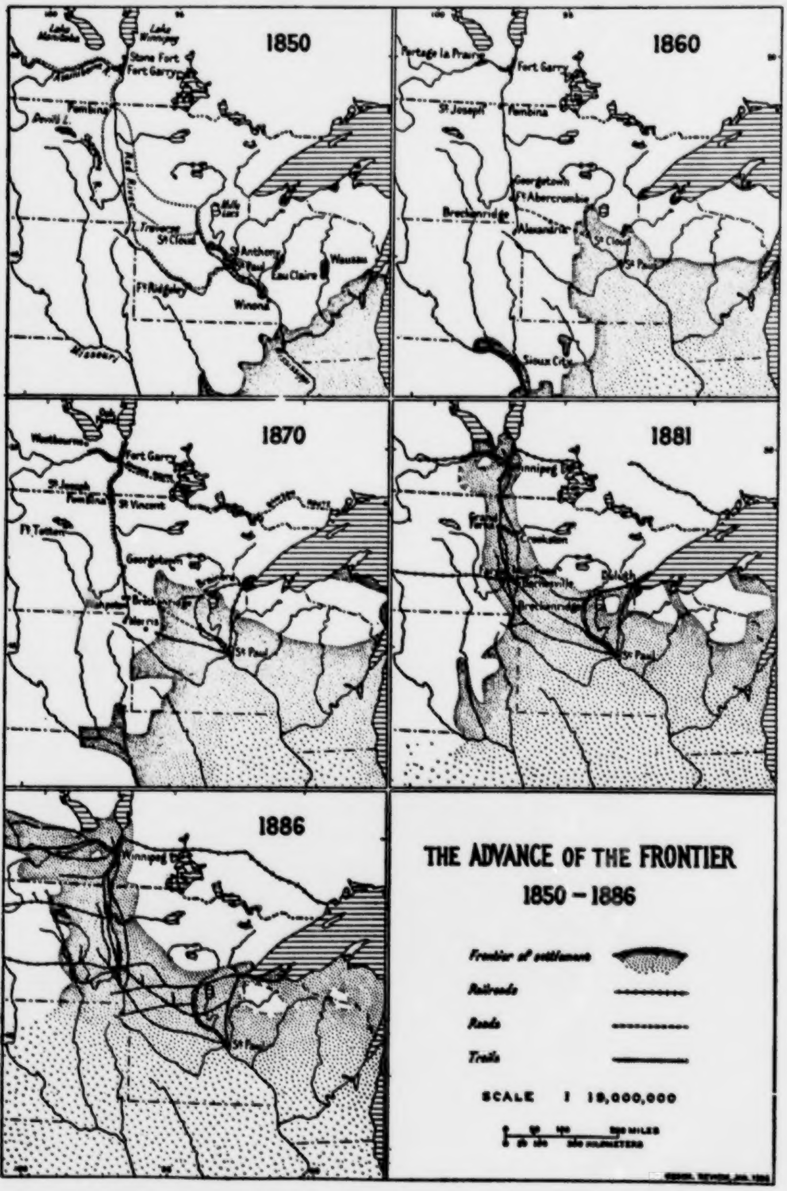
The native inhabitants of the prairie-parkland, the plains Indians and Métis, ignored in large measure the European imposed frontiers of economy and political allegiance that partitioned the plains. The grassland watershed had little impact upon the lifeways of these equestrian nomads. Their movements, unlike those of the European traders and settlers, were governed by the migrations of the buffalo herds and the warfare patterns of the plains. The buffalo Indians continued to hunt and trade to their best advantage across the Forty-Ninth Parallel, while the half-breed hunters of Red River followed the retreating buffalo herds far to the south of the American line.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the American settlement frontier had entered the Great Plains. With the rise of St. Paul to urban dominance in Minnesota, the British imposed political and economic unity of the Canadian plains was for the first time seriously challenged. A unity which had hitherto made little mark upon the indigenous peoples was now threatened by a rival American metropolitan influence.

The advance of the American settlement frontier ended the isolation that had characterized the British fur trade in interior North America. The Red River Settlement, imperial outpost and hub of the inland trade, was separated from the Canadas by a thousand miles of empty Shield and from York Factory, its maritime outlet to Europe, by almost as many miles of difficult and often dangerous water navigation. The colony lay astride the Red River of the North, the only major waterway to breach in depth the political divide of the northern plains. Rising some two hundred miles south of the Forty-Ninth Parallel, it formed the most natural connection with the plains to the south. Not until the emergence of metropolitan forces within the northern plains, however, could full advantage be taken of this singular north-south line of communications. With the advent of the American railway system to Minnesota and the appearance of St. Paul as the first urban centre in the northern grasslands, the walls of isolation collapsed. The whole of the Red River valley rapidly became part of the expanding hinterland of the young American metropolis. Lengthening cart brigades and the introduction of steam navigation on the Red forged strong links between Fort Garry, emporium of the British plains trade, and St. Paul, burgeoning commercial capital of the American agricultural Northwest. The economic advantages of the shorter Red River route to St. Paul, as against the long haul from York, were accorded official recognition in 1858 when a portion of the Hudson's Bay Company's outfit first travelled that way.

Although employed for many years by the Red River free traders, the adoption by the Company of the St. Paul route marked the first significant disruption of the union of plain and forest that for so many years had been the strength of the Company's trade. As the Company increasingly supplied its prairie-parkland districts from the American railhead, the whole of the region was incorporated by way of Fort Garry into the economic hinterland of the American metropolis. The outer limits of the St. Paul trade were defined within a matter of years by the physical limits to wheeled transport. These limits were achieved by the Red River carts that carried the overland trade to the very edge of, but not into, the northern forest. With the decline of the buffalo and the poor crops of the 1860's in the Red River Settlement, the cart cargoes included, besides trade goods, growing amounts of American pork and flour. The trade of the fur forest, in contrast, continued to depend upon the waterways and the York boat, and remained in large part tied to Europe by way of the maritime entrepôt at York.

The weakening of the traditional ties between northern plain and forest gave rise to a re-orientation of the prairie-parkland economy that threatened to create an economic union with the frontier towns of the Upper Mississippi. Although the Forty-Ninth Parallel was breached in the west, as evidenced by the cart traffic between Fort Benton on the Upper Missouri and Fort Edmonton on the North Saskatchewan, it was


1850
Lake Manitoba
Lake Winnipeg
Stone Fort
Fort Garry
Pembina
Devil L.
Red River
Mille Lacs
L. Traverse
St Cloud
St Anthony
St Paul
Ft Ridgley
Winona
Eau Claire
Wausau
Missouri
1860
Portage la Prairie
Fort Garry
St Joseph
Pembina
Georgetown
Ft Abercrombie
Breckenridge
Alexandria
St Cloud
St Paul
Sioux City
1870
Westbourne
Fort Garry
St Joseph
Pembina
St Vincent
Ft Totten
Georgetown
Breckenridge
Morris
St Paul
1881
Winnipeg
Grand Forks
Crookston
Duluth
Breckenridge
St Paul
1886
Winnipeg
St Paul
Frontier of settlement
Railroads
Roads
Trails
SCALE 1 10,000,000
0 50 100 200 MILES
0 50 100 300 KILOMETERS
GEOGR. REVIEW, JAN.

THE ADVANCE OF THE FRONTIER
1850 – 1886

broken earliest and most effectively along the broad corridor of the Red. The growing reality of an economic union with the northern plains gave substance to American hopes of political annexation of the British North-West. Nowhere were these sentiments stronger and more frequently expressed than in Minnesota, the state that was fast usurping the commerce of the British plains and which had the most to gain from an economic and political union, a union which its citizens increasingly viewed as its manifest destiny.

For the first time since the union of the British fur companies in 1821, close relationships were also developing with colonial Canada. With the closing of the settlement frontier in Upper Canada and the move toward Confederation, the Western Interior came to be considered from Toronto as a distant but desirable frontier of Ontario settlement and economic expansion. This view intensified in the face of the American encroachment, and the incorporation of the northern plains came to be seen as the legitimate destiny of an emerging transcontinental nation. Thus, with the decline of the fur trade that had carried the European exploitation frontier into the northern plains, the destiny of the western grasslands became inextricably bound up with the purely indigenous forces of the North American settlement frontier.

By 1870 the prairie-parkland region had arrived at the most crucial point in its historical-geographical evolution. The marriage of western plain and forest forged by the water-based fur trade had broken down and, in the absence of good east-west communications with the new Canadian Confederation, the facts of geography appeared to dictate the incorporation of the region into the neighbouring and rapidly expanding American settlement frontier and, ultimately, into the polity of the American Republic. The political union with Canada in 1870, in consequence, contravened the new economic regionalism that was emerging in the northern plains, as well as the logic of the geography upon which it was based.

For more than a decade following Confederation, Canada was unable to extend adequate transportation facilities to the new province of Manitoba and the unorganized portions of the Northwest Territories that comprised the remainder of the region. The difficult overland Dawson route to the Lakehead fell far short of establishing any meaningful ties with the eastern provinces. The growth of population in Manitoba and the beginnings of a commercial grain trade, in consequence, generated an increased north-south traffic that witnessed the replacement of the cart by the railway in the valley of the Red. In 1876 grain was first exported from southern Manitoba via St. Paul and two years later the railway connection with Minnesota was extended to St. Boniface.

At the same time the expanding agricultural ecumene of Manitoba merged with continuous settlement south of the border. In 1870 the American settlement frontier was poised on the eastern margins of the upper Red River valley and was separated from the narrow band of riverine settlement on the Canadian section of the Red by some two hundred miles of wilderness. But a decade later, homesteaders on both sides of the boundary had bridged the gap, creating a corridor of continuous settlement from Lake Traverse, the source of the Red, down to its delta at the south end of Lake Winnipeg. During this decade of settlement in the valley, "the pattern of settlement in this natural region seems to have been little distorted by the presence of international boundary."[14] Farther west, American territorial governments were extended in the 1860's along the Forty-Ninth Parallel from the Dakotas to Idaho. By the late 1860's, American whiskey pedlars had overrun the almost empty Canadian grasslands adjoining the border. They were subsequently ejected from Canadian territory by the newly formed North-West Mounted Police in 1874, only to be replaced by the more lasting influence of the Montana ranching frontier, which by 1877 was supplying the beef market afforded by the treaty Indians of the southwestern Canadian plains.

Thus, entry into the Canadian federation was not in itself an impediment to the further development of the new economic regionalism that had been evolving in the northern plains prior to political union. Rather, increasing cross-boundary traffic during the 1870's intensified and consolidated this trend. Not until the Canadian government provided an alternate east-west system of communications and effected a higher tariff barrier along the international boundary did the latter reassert itself as an economic as well as a political divide across the northern plains.

As the fur trade gave way to agricultural settlement in the prairie-parkland west, the eastern provinces around which confederation had been built strove to establish an economic *raison d'être* for a political union that reached from sea to sea. To this end the National Policy was implemented in 1879. The following year, the first concrete step toward the building of the long mooted transcontinental railway was taken, when the federal government reached agreement with the Canadian Pacific Syndicate for completion of the rail line that had been one of the terms of confederation. By the early 1880's railway construction had pushed the line from Winnipeg clear across the southern prairie-parkland and was fast approaching completion to the Lakehead. The railway was completed between Montreal and Vancouver in 1885 and, significantly, it was on Dominion Day of the following year that the first transcontinental train arrived in Winnipeg.

The tariffs of the National Policy made the Forty-Ninth Parallel all but impervious to trade with the south, while the widening rail net of the region funnelled its produce eastward along the main line of the C.P.R. Poor crops and slackening immigration in the early 1880's proved temporary and, in 1887, ten million bushels of wheat passed through Winnipeg. Tariffs and the railway saw Winnipeg supersede St. Paul as the commercial centre and metropolitan gateway to the region. The railways further expedited agricultural settlement and, with the rise to dominance of the commercial wheat economy, became the sinews of an east-west trade that bound the prairie-parkland to Canada and linked it to world markets beyond.

The railway era also saw the re-establishment of the prairie-parkland as commissary to the fur forest. The renewal of this north-south linkage was apparent as early as 1878 when York Factory was replaced by Fort Garry as the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company. Although river transport remained dominant in the northern forest for many years, it has become, via the railway and the cities of the prairie-parkland, an exploitation frontier of the Dominion. Long of marginal significance to the prairie-parkland region, the north has again come to play an important role in its economic life. These new connections, however, have not significantly diverted east-west trade to the maritime ports on Hudson Bay. Even the Hudson Bay railway has not succeeded in deflecting the staples of the prairie-parkland from their traditional outlets on the St. Lawrence and the Pacific.

In laying east-west ties across the topographic grain of the continent, the railways became, in a sense, the successors to the North-West Company. Just as the transcontinental water routes of the Montreal traders had connected the prairie-parkland with the St. Lawrence and the Pacific, so the railways afforded an east-west avenue of communications which, save for the short-lived achievement of the Nor-Westers, was unique in the region's history. The political future of the region, in consequence, would henceforth depend upon an economic orientation that defied nature and one that, in terms of water transport at least, had not proved lasting. Although technologically more advanced means of communications have, in the wake of the railways, successively hurdled the north-south grain of the land, the subsequent history of the region and, indeed, that of the nation, has been characterized by economic tensions between natural north-south routes and the politically imposed east-west routes.[15]

In the face of this natural north-south pull there can be little doubt that the maintenance of east-west economic interactions has been a necessary condition for the survival of Canadian sovereignty in the northern half of the continent. The force of the north-south pull has varied from one region of Canada to another. It has not, since the rise of the commercial grain economy, achieved dominance in the prairie-parkland west. Rather, the region's wheat was the first catalyst of interprovincial trade and, as such, inaugurated a truly symbiotic economic relationship between the old lands of the east and this new region of the west. The east organized its industry under the protection of the tariff and became the supply base of the agrarian west. Agricultural expansion in the prairie-parkland, as a result, was accompanied by, and in large degree dependent upon, corresponding progress in the industrializing sections of the east. The interprovincial trade generated by prairie-parkland agricultural produce has, in recent years, been strengthened by movements of fossil fuels dominantly oriented in the same direction. In sharp contrast to other Canadian regions, there has not, since the building of the transcontinental railway, been any significant basis for economic complementarity between the primary producing plains of Canada and the physically similar primary producing plains of the United States. Thus, within a few decades following Confederation, the prairie-parkland appeared as a new region of Canada, a region that has played a vital role in establishing and maintaining the east-west traffic that is the life blood of the nation.

CHARACTER OF THE REGION

Above all, Canada's regions are northern, which places them in harsher environments than their counterparts to the south. This has caused Canada's population to concentrate near the U.S. boundary. The northern climate, together with the virtually indigenous Laurentian Shield, and the Western Cordillera, have thwarted the development of continuous east-west settlement in Canada. Unfettered by the barrier of the Shield, continuous transcontinental settlement has been more nearly achieved in the warmer climates of the United States. For this reason, Frederick Jackson Turner was able to show that the west in America was not a place but a stage in a process that swept across the country. In Canada, on the other hand, discontinuous settlement has resulted in the development of a series of more geographically discrete regions, isolated one from the other by much larger voids of sparsely populated territory. The prairie-parkland west, more a place than process, is the largest, most northern and the most continental of the settled regions of Canada. It is also the most geographically discrete, in that it is flanked on either side by the two major barriers to settlement in southern Canada—the Laurentian Shield and the Western Cordillera.

For this reason, J. Howard Richards has identified isolation as the outstanding characteristic of this landlocked Canadian region.[16] Physically, it is isolated from the Canadian heartland of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Lowlands by a thousand miles of still largely empty wilderness, and from the populated coastlands of British Columbia by five hundred miles of thinly settled mountain and plateau. To the north, isolation is imposed by the agriculturally impenetrable boreal forest whose vast but vacant width shades into the barren ground, which in turn abuts a frozen sea. Only to the south, where the prairie-parkland opens out into its corresponding region in the United States, does the physical isolation of its people break down. However, in this one area where settlement contiguous to the region has developed, the people of the prairie-parkland are separated from their neighbours by an artificial isolation imposed, not by physical distance, but by the political distance that separates sovereign states.

This physically and politically imposed isolation is, in Richard's view, further "reinforced by a sense of psychological separateness and difference which modern communications have not removed." It is isolation conceived of in these terms that "has helped to create a special identity, and common acceptance has induced a conceptual frame in which popular characterizations such as 'bread basket' and 'colonial economy' are frequent and vague ideas exist of second class economic status *vis-a-vis* the rest of Canada."[17] Wreford Watson, has posed an interesting alternative explanation for this "psychological separateness." "Perhaps," he writes, "we have blamed the natural environment for what the environment of the mind really caused. One wonders to what extent the prairie people, having found in wheat a commodity that in a sense defied isolation, entrenched themselves as wheat producers, thereby isolating themselves from the incentive and opportunity to engage in industry?"[18] Whatever reasons underly this feeling of regional isolation, most geographers have identified this feature of relative location as the most fundamental geographical characteristic of the prairie-parkland region.

Other forms of isolation have also affected prairie-parkland life. Isolation at the individual and group levels has traditionally been part of everyday rural life in the region. Isolation at these scales has resulted, not from the location of the region relative to other regions, but from the internal spatial characteristics of intraregional settlement. Isolation at the individual or family level was predetermined by the implementation of the township survey prior to widespread agricultural colonization. The division of the prairie-parkland by a survey system that suited both the land and the wheat economy ensured that settlement would be dispersed on the uniform squares of the sectional grid. This almost ubiquitous pattern militated against social contact, but "people did become accustomed to the dispersion, despite the early complaints and doubts of various academic critics, and the quarter sections became as accepted a part of the environment of the West as the spacious prairie scene."[19] Thus, apart from scattered areas where settlement is linear within the confines of river lots, or is nucleated in farm villages, physical distance prevented frequent contact between neighbours. At the same time, spatially localized ethnic settlement created what Watson has called a "social distance" between large blocks of peoples of different cultural backgrounds.[20] An isolation of segregation, in consequence, was superimposed upon the secluded life of the homesteader. Paradoxically, isolation at both the family and ethnic levels served to further emphasize the common problems of living in the prairie-parkland region, and thereby contributed to a heightened awareness of a shared or regional way of life.

With the multiplication of more effective forms of communication and the emergence of a predominantly urban society, the isolation of farmer and "foreigner" has largely broken down. The intraregional identification with farmstead and ethnic group has for the most part been superseded by loyalties to service centre, city, and province. However, while Winnipegers today might consider themselves somewhat different from Edmontonians, just as Manitobans and Albertans may look at some of their problems in different ways, these intraregional attitudes have had little impact upon the views of prairie-parklanders in their dealings with the rest of Canada. Rather, the common problems of an isolated, primary producing region whose economic well-being is still largely determined by the success of its agriculture, has caused prairie-parklanders to retain their feelings of regional loyalty. Clark has noted that "those who live in the region have usually tended to identify themselves with all of it rather than with a part."[21] Rees writes that "there are, admittedly, some vigorous feelings of loyalty to the land, but these seem to be for the Prairie as a whole rather than for any particular locality."[22] Hamelin has further observed that "en prenant conscience de son identité, l'Alsama creé l'un des plus puissants mecanismes d'une certain 'canadianisation' où le concept des deux nations 'is wrong.' "[23] The break-down of ethnic isolation and subsequent rapid ethnic mixing "bids fair," according to Watson, "to create a distinctive Prairie culture."[24]

In addition to its outstanding isolation, the prairie-parkland is also the coldest and most continental part of the Canadian ecumene. Distance from the sea, reinforced by the Rocky Mountain barrier on the west, makes it the only extensive area of subhumid climate and settlement in Canada. It is also the most northerly of Canada's settled regions and, in this respect, the most Canadian. Continentality and northern location combine to impose upon the prairie-parkland the longest and most severe winters of the continuous ecumene. Thus, its inhabitants share a climate which, in terms of extremes and uncertainties, is more marked than that in any other part of settled Canada. The negative image of the prairie-parkland in other parts of Canada is strongly conditioned by its climatic characteristics. This view is accentuated by regional isolation. Isolation in turn has served to exaggerate the extraregional perception of the climate in the sense that most Canadians live in the humid, more temperate parts of the country, and have little or no experience of climatic characteristics transitional to the prairie-parkland extremes.

Despite the extreme climate, continuous agricultural settlement reaches its highest latitudes in North America in this region. This results from the dominant northwest-southeast trend of its summer isotherms. As was realized more than a century ago by the American climatologist, Lorin Blodget, thermal distributions in summer ensured that the northern plains were "adapted to the fullest occupation by cultivated nations."[25] This occupation, however, has not been achieved without cost. The triangle of the prairie-parkland is wedged between frost to the north and east, and drought to the south and west. Both hazards can express themselves throughout the entire region. The prairie-parkland is exposed, not only to the vagaries of climate within, but also to the vicissitudes of markets without, and so steers an uneasy course between penury and plenitude. This has necessitated the development of a distinct regional agriculture based upon a series of adjustments to environmental and economic conditions that are unique within Canada.

Scale or dimension is also an outstanding characteristic of the prairie-parkland. As two English observers have remarked, "The visitor to the traditional south of the Prairie Provinces is aware of a difference in dimension from other parts of Canada."[26] The region is by far the largest unit of "bloc" or continuous ecumene in Canada.[27] Its size has been compared to "two Hungaries and four Roumanias placed end to end."[28] The prairie-parkland is not densely settled but, by virtue of its vastness, contains the largest population and market outside the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Lowlands. It also has the country's best agricultural soils and encompasses the largest tract of cultivable land, accounting for more than three-quarters of the total cropland of Canada. This massive agricultural resource has ensured for the region continued dominance in the agricultural production of the nation. Although the proportion of the labour force employed in agriclture has declined to less than 25 percent, the region still accounts for between 50 and 60 percent of the net value of agricultural production in Canada.[29] It is also the nation's major producer of petroleum, natural gas and potash. The bulk of these mineral products, like those of agriculture, are exported from the region in raw form. Thus, the prairie-parkland retains both its "identity of primary producer and its significance in the Canadian economy and export market."[30]

Although the proportion of the urban population has increased from 37 percent in 1931 to 61 percent in 1961, there has been no comparable increase in manufacturing. The proportion of the labour force in secondary industry has increased only from 7.5 percent to 10.5 percent over the same period.[31] In sharp contrast to its dominant role in certain aspects of primary production, the region accounts for a mere 6 to 7 percent of the net value of manufactured goods in Canada, yet contains 18 percent of the country's population.[32] This is not meant to imply that the economy of the region has been unchanging. As elsewhere in Canada, urbanization and higher standards of living have resulted in rapid expansion of the tertiary industries. The new staples of fossil fuels and potash have brought about significant diversification within the primary sector. This trend is also apparent in the agricultural produce of the region. It is manifest in the increased role of livestock, oilseed production and special crops in the farm economy. Despite its modest growth, secondary industry promises to play an increasingly more important role in the regional economy. Diversification within the primary sector has resulted in increased production of commodities that are more suitable for processing and manufacturing within the region. Secondary industry based on these new products has already contributed to expansion and diversification in the manufacturing sector. So the prairie-parkland is "a regional entity in which there are not only many common problems but also common sectors of potential development."[33]

The prairie-parkland, however, is still dominated by economic and financial influences external to it. This is not only the case in manufacturing but, despite the extraordinarily rapid urbanization of the region, it is still subservient to extraregional metropolitan influences. As Richards has pointed out, there is no dominant city in the prairie-parkland; "rather there are cities which relate to subregions and a total region which tends to be oriented to Toronto and Montreal on the one hand and Vancouver on the other."[34] The absence of a regional metropolis, in Kerr's view, "lies mainly in the lack of diversity of the prairie hinterland, which, with its agrarian economy and overwhelming focus on wheat, could not support a national centre but rather a number of well spaced regional centres."[35] Prior to World War I, Winnipeg promised to achieve national stature as a financial centre. However, it failed to fulfill this early promise and, since World War I, has declined relative to other prairie-parkland cities. According to Kerr the success of the wheat economy prior to World War I was such that Winnipeg entrepreneurs found it unattractive to compete in other areas of the economy with the rival centres of Montreal and Toronto. Subsequently, relative size of market and distance from the populated areas of central Canada has militated against the location of major manufacturing companies in Winnipeg and other prairie centres.[36] The continued influence of agriculture upon the urban centres of the prairie-parkland has caused Watson to remark that, "there are few parts of Canada where cities still function to such an extent as service centres for farms and ranches."[37] Rees has further noted that the small town of the prairie-parkland "was an incidental by-product of an economy overwhelmingly dominated by farming."[38]

The outstanding features of the physical and human geography of the region have combined to produce a cultural landscape that is unique in Canada. With the possible exception of Quebec, it is the most easily identifiable and probably the most distinct of the Canadian rural landscapes. The cultural landscape of the plains is recent even in Canadian terms. Its youthfulness has evoked among observers images of landscape frailty and transiency. These impressions are reflected in the vertical boards of the outbuildings, the often unpainted machine sheds, granaries and even houses, "the corrugated iron and the barbed wire, the tufted windbreaks which struggle to survive around the homestead . . . the dirt-and-gravel roads which run into towns that are less compact and tidy than in the east."[39] Frailty and transiency derive in part from the preferred use of wood as a building material, while "failure to build solidly and tastefully in the first place, and to maintain the buildings subsequently, can be attributed to lack of capital, the speculative mood during the period of initial settlement, the absence of building codes, low and unstable incomes and the depression syndrome."[40] What is dismally true of the countryside is typical of the small towns. The latter "resemble squatter settlements stranded on the prairie. Many centres are, in essence, pioneer settlements preserved in the amber of the depression when their growth virtually stopped."[41] The cultural landscape is anything but aesthetic. It is workaday and utilitarian. In this region of strictly commercial farming on an extensive scale, settlement has been exploitive, as in the case of the pre-depression "wheat miner" and the present town farmer. The Canadian plains, therefore, "have been no place for the loving labour of the *petit propriétaire*."[42] Today's exodus from the land perpetuates the image of a frail, transient, and even derelict landscape.

From the geographer's point of view, the most prominent aspect of the cultural landscape is undoubtedly the monotonous or regular occurrence of its most characteristic features. The regularity of the landscape subdivisions, it has been remarked, "has been unequalled since Roman times and from the air the towns resemble colonia standing in their centuriated fields."[43] As was common to many parts of Canada, the surveyor preceded the settler. In no other part of the country, however, has the cultural landscape been more completely patterned by the land and railway surveys than by the settlers themselves. Although pre-settlement surveys have impressed varying degrees of regularity and uniformity upon the occupied lands of Canada, only the sectional survey has consistently combined uniformity in dimension with rigidity in orientation. Thus, the monotony of a regular survey system is twice-told throughout the vast extent of the Canadian plains.

Throughout the region, the lines of the survey hierarchy lie normal to one another along the cardinal directions, and express themselves in a series of inset squares that range in size from the 40 acre legal subdivision to the 36 square mile township. Uniformity is given further emphasis by roads that are regularly laid out along the sides of the squares and which criss-cross at right angles at one and two mile intervals. The survey system and associated land policies caused the farmsteads to be dispersed. Level land and high quality soils made certain that most of the sections within the townships would eventually be taken up by homesteaders. This was, in fact, largely achieved by the end of World War I, and has resulted in a distribution of farmsteads that is more regular over large areas than that of any other Canadian region. The quality of the physical environment also ensured that almost all of the land within each quarter section would be put to agricultural use, so that field boundaries, moreso than anywhere else in Canada, have come to coincide with the boundaries of the survey system. Continuous settlement and level land have further made feasible the construction of the rural service roads in the manner prescribed by the sectional survey. Thus, the cultural landscape has evolved to virtual congruency with a preconceived survey that was systematically applied to a physical landscape almost devoid of settlement. Large scale congruency between the two is as much owing to the qualities of the physical environment as to a single survey system strictly applied.

The uniform disposition of roads and farmsteads, together with the all pervasive chequerboard pattern of cropland, fallow and pasture, is punctuated on the plains by the appearance at almost regular intervals along the rail lines of small service centres that seem to be differentiated in name only. The regularity in the spacing of the service centres has resulted from widespread similarities in economy and density of occupance, and from the symmetry of a superimposed rail net designed to service the rural areas at established intervals. The townsite surveys conducted by the railways imposed a stereotype gridiron subdivision which in microcosm mirrors the monotony of the surrounding plains. Few of the towns and villages of the prairie-parkland are without "railroad main streets" with "false fronts facing the elevators" and, like the countryside in which they are set, have not escaped "the heavy, dull hand of the 19th century surveyor."[44] The gridiron pattern is also dominant in the morphology of prairie-parkland towns and cities.

The past few decades have witnessed significant changes in the cultural landscape of the region. Increasing mechanization of agriculture has been accompanied by steady increases in the size of farms. This, together with the growing popularity of town farming, has resulted in widespread rural out-migration and abandonment of farmsteads. The net effect upon the settlement pattern has been to increase the dispersion of occupied farmsteads and to cause some nucleation of farm operators in the larger service centres. Depopulation of the countryside has also occasioned a dramatic decline in the number and population of the smaller service centres. Declining rural population combined with the increased use of motor vehicle transport has meant the abandonment of many railway branch lines and the closure of railway stations, freight sheds and grain elevators. The motor vehicle has also been responsible for the development of improved highway communications that are more arterial than local. Designed to provide more effective links between the growing urban centres, they ignore the cardinal orientations and have intruded an irregular pattern into the basic network of rural roads. These changes in the cultural landscape are symptomatic of fundamental adjustments in the rural economy and way of life. However, the patterns established during the classic period of plains agricultural occupance are still the dominant ones today.

Although the cultural landscape of the prairie-parkland is very different from that of any other Canadian region, it is in many ways akin to that of its regional counterpart in the United States. Because of broad similarities of economy and environment on both sides of the Forty-Ninth Parallel, geographers have often chosen to ignore the political boundary so that they might treat both regions as one. Many early studies of the geography of North America stressed these similarities, and the Canadian plains were frequently considered as part of a single Great Plains region, or simply as the northern expression of two continental agricultural regions—the spring wheat belt and the Great Plains ranch region.[45] More recent studies take cognizance of common characteristics on either side of the border, but tend to emphasize the cross-boundary differences. This dichotomy of views is not unique in its application to the prairie-parkland. It has been a common and problematic feature of geographical studies of the Canadian regions adjoining the United States. The basis of the debate and justification for the more recent emphasis are well summarized by J. Wreford Watson in his comprehensive study of North American countries and regions.

> The divisions of North America . . . present themselves not only in different kinds of terrain, produced by relief and climate, nor in different countrysides, stamped by agriculture and industry, but also in different human regions, existing (as Louis Wirth claims) each as a distinct 'state of mind, a way of life, a mode of collective consciousness'.
>
> Unfortunately this has not been widely enough recognized and some geographers, stopping short at questions of collective consciousness, custom, belief, and loyalty, have divided the continent into regions as though political and cultural frontiers did not exist Indeed a leading geographer of the early twentieth century specifically urged that, in attempting to recognize regions, boundaries should be chosen which resulted 'from the work of the cosmic forces that make climate, surface, soil, mineral deposits, land, lake and sea.' Political frontiers were to be ignored since 'Political units such as Canada, Maryland, or California have their present boundaries because of the whims of chance and the accidents of history.' Consequently, the Maritime Provinces of Canada were grouped with New England; southern Ontario with those parts of the Great Lakes States lying in the dairy belt; the Canadian prairies with those areas of the Dakotas and Minnesota comprising the spring wheat belt and southern British Columbia with Pacific north-west. Canada was thus treated as merely the physical attenuation and economic extension of regions in America.'

> At first this seems plausible enough. There is often no physiographic break between a region in the United States and its counterpart in Canada. There may even be no break in land use. Would it not be proper, therefore, to describe the two regions as one? Such was Russell Smith's proposal. Taking America's spring wheat region, he wrote: 'This region extends (from Minnesota) into South Dakota and North Dakota and into Canada where it extends across the three prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. How foolish it would be to describe the Spring Wheat Region three times for each of the three American states and three times more for each of the three Canadian provinces!'
>
> This may be true, but it would be equally foolish to pretend that Canada and the United States were irrelevant merely because their boundary happened to interrupt the wheat belt![46]

Differences between the prairie-parkland and its corresponding American region are not confined to differences of the mind. They also find expression on the land. Watson, who has examined the cross-boundary differences in the valley of the Red River of the North, has catalogued a variety of tangible differences.[47] One of the most outstanding is the pattern of river lot settlement along the lower Assiniboine and the Canadian section of the Red. Although essentially the same survey system was implemented on both sides of the boundary, and a similar agricultural occupance effected under similar physical circumstances, the French river lots exist in the Canadian landscape as palpable indicators of a different history. Not significant in terms of their total area, these relict features occur sporadically throughout the Canadian plains and afford distinctive cores to cities such as Winnipeg and Edmonton. Wolfe has discerned major differences in the railway pattern, such that "if the boundary between Canada and the United States were removed from the rail-network map, one would have little difficulty in putting it back again in about the same place."[48] The failure of rail lines, as opposed to roads, to breach the boundary, is ample testimony to the absence of economic complementarity between the two areas. The fact that the Canadian plains belong to a different polity is perhaps most strongly expressed in the differences in agricultural land use on either side of the boundary. Reitsma has recently pointed out that "truly remarkable cross-boundary differences" are discernible in the crop and livestock combinations, and concludes that "due to differences in (agricultural) policies and other man-made rules and regulations, it often makes a great deal of difference for a farmer whether he operates on one side of the line or on the other."[49] Differences of this sort have resulted from what Watson has called the "massive consuming power of central authority" which, in making inroads into local and regional control has tied the region more closely to a government whose problems and objectives are singular on the continent.[50]

Regional differences as envisaged by Wirth, such as a distinct state of mind and collective consciousness, undoubtedly separate prairie-parklanders from their neighbours to the south as effectively as elsewhere in Canada. Northerly location and size have caused the centre of gravity of the prairie-parkland population to be farther removed from the international boundary than that of any other Canadian region. Low densities of population on both sides of the border have ensured that the metropolitan centres on either side of the line are separated by greater distances than elsewhere along the U.S.-Canada boundary. This, together with the comparatively shorter distances between the main cities of the Canadian prairie-parkland, has prevented, as Clark has noted, the same "intimate interaction" with Americans as in the other settled regions.[51] Geographically, at least, it would appear that this most isolated and northerly region of Canada is also the most Canadian of the border regions of the Dominion.

GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE ON THE REGION

There is as yet no readily identifiable or unified literature by geographers on the prairie-parkland region. Geographical publications have been few and diverse in terms of both area and topic. Despite the geographical unity and uniqueness of this major Canadian region, the paucity of geographical research is not hard to explain.

Geography as a research discipline has a short history in Canada and is considerably more recent in the Canadian West. The first department of geography in Canada was organized in 1935 by Griffith Taylor at the University of Toronto. Not until 1950, when a department was formed at the University of Manitoba, was geography formally established in a prairie-parkland university. The number of departments has since increased to eight and, in 1969, the first geography Ph.D. in western Canada was awarded at the University of Alberta. Geography departments in western Canada were initially staffed by geographers from eastern Canada and abroad, many of whom were temporary and showed little interest in prairie-parkland research. This, together with the recency of professional training, has militated against the development of an integrated and substantive corpus of geographical research on the region.

Prior to the establishment of professional geography in Canada, a great deal of research was carried out that was essentially geographical in nature. This was largely conducted under government auspices. Concomitant with settlement in western Canada, masses of geographical information were collected and published by government authorities. Many of these publications were little more than compendia of information on little known areas of the West. Others were broader in scope and concerned mainly with the practical problem of evaluating resources. One of the earliest and most outstanding of these evaluations was that by the botanist, John Macoun. In his *Manitoba and the Great North-West.*[52] Macoun disputed some of the findings of Hind and Palliser. Macoun was particularly sanguine about the suitability of Palliser's Triangle for agricultural settlement, and his views undoubtedly influenced the decision to build the C.P.R. across the southern prairies rather than through the fertile belt to the north. Macoun was the last of the scientist-explorers of the prairie-parkland region, and his account of the geography of the region remained unrivalled until the 1930's.

In 1931 the American Geographical Society initiated a world-wide enquiry into pioneer settlement processes. The Society's work was extended to Canada and resulted in the production of six short studies on pioneer settlement in the prairie-parkland.[53] More important, the work begun by the American Geographical Society was taken up in the impressive Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, supported by the American Social Science Research Council. In 1935 the first publication in this series, *Prairie Settlement: The Geographical Setting*, was produced by the political economist, W. A. Mackintosh.[54] Writing in the wake of the dry years in the southern Canadian plains, Mackintosh emphasized the hazards to agricultural settlement in Palliser's Triangle, and tended to re-affirm the earlier opinions of Palliser and Hind. Under the general editorship of Mackintosh and W. L. G. Joerg, seven additional volumes were published, of which five dealt with the prairie-parkland region. Although written by historians and social scientists other than geographers, these volumes together comprise the most thorough and comprehensive study of the geographical characteristics of settlement in the region.

About the time geography was taking root at Canadian universities, much work of geographical interest was being produced by historians. This was especially the case with the Laurentian school, a Canadian based environmentalist school of historians which took as its fundamental premise the Laurentian hypothesis expounded by the British geographer, Marion I. Newbigin.

The historians who have most fully taken cognizance of the role of geography in western Canadian history have been A. S. Morton, H. A. Innis, W. L. Morton and M. Giraud. At the same time, they have made unrivalled contributions to an understanding of the region's geography at different times in the past. A. S. Morton and M. Giraud have prefaced their major works with accounts of the geography of western Canada.[55] and together with Innis and W. L. Morton,[56] have woven much geography into their interpretations of the region. W. L. Morton's understanding and sensitive descriptions of the landscape are outstanding in the regional literature.

The first significant geography of the whole of Canada was Griffith Taylor's *Canada: A Study of Cool, Continental Environments and their Effect on British and French Settlement*, published in 1947.[57] Taylor was Canada's first geographer and the last of the outstanding environmental determinists. He divided the country into twenty "natural regions," two of which, the Winnipeg Basin and the Western Prairie, embraced the prairie-parkland. On the basis of homoclimes, he compared these two units with similar regions in the U.S.S.R. Taylor, who had a longstanding reputation for unabashed forecasts of future populations, predicted that both the Winnipeg Basin and much of the western prairie would support densely settled farm populations because of their climate and fertile soils.

With the exception of the inner core of Palliser's Triangle, where he supported Mackintosh's view that the variability of rainfall would preclude wheat cultivation, Taylor envisaged the development of an intensive wheat producing region in the prairie-parkland that would support population densities of sixteen and more persons per square mile. Flanking the prairie-parkland on the north, there would develop a broad subarctic zone to which the cultivation of coarse grains would be relegated, and in which densities grading from sixteen to five persons per square mile would be achieved. Taylor's views on the future zonation of agriculture and population were supported with generous comparisons to conditions in climatically similar areas of the Soviet Union. There is, however, little indication that the rural population densities that Taylor forecast for the prairie-parkland will ever be achieved. The peak of rural population is over and agricultural densities have been dwindling in response to technological change. As was often the case among the environmentalists, Taylor failed to consider the possibility of technology, rather than the inherent qualities of the land, as a major factor dictating the characteristics of land utilization.

In more spectacular fashion, Taylor forecast the development of a high density population "oval" in Alberta extending from Lethbridge through Calgary to Edmonton, and based upon large-scale exploitation of the vast coal resources of the Rocky Mountains and adjacent plains. He also stated that "hundreds of factories based on the agricultural, forest, and mining resources of Western Canada can well be developed—as is happening in central Siberia."[58] Heavy industry based upon coal would also agglomerate in the oval and population densities would rival those of southern Ontario. "If Russia can haul iron ore from Magnitogorsk to Kuznetsk, why cannot we do the same with regard to Ontario iron ore?"[59] Although a population build-up has begun in this part of Alberta, and has been accompanied by some industrialization, it is owing largely to the exploitation of oil and natural gas and the rapid growth of Edmonton and Calgary. A zone of heavy population may well develop in Alberta in the near future. Taylor, predicted that this would be achieved in a century. In this prediction he was as curiously conservative as some of his other forecasts were reckless. The decline of the Canadian coal industry began with the discovery of oil at Leduc in 1947 which, ironically, was the year in which Taylor's book was published.

Taylor was alone in applying geography to such grandiose tasks. He was severely criticized by his colleagues and widely discussed by non-geographers. However, his highly imaginative work is not without appeal and his population predictions continue to stimulate debate. Prior to Taylor's work on Canada, geography in this country was essentially descriptive. Taylor's pronouncements had the effect of driving other geographers "farther into their encyclopedic foxholes."[60] About the same time, the regional approach to geography was beginning to decline in popularity, and during the last two decades has held second place to research in systematic aspects of the discipline. The earlier rejection of environmental determinism, together with the emergence of systematic studies, has profoundly affected the nature of regional geography in this country. These trends began just as geography was establishing itself in Canada and well before its appearance in western Canadian universities. The result has been that few regional geographies have been produced, and that regional geography for some time remained much more encyclopaedic than interpretive. The encyclopaedic approach is perhaps best exemplified in *Canadian Regions: A Geography of Canada*, edited by Donald F. Putnam.[61] In this once popular university text, the chapters on the prairie provinces amount to little more than detailed enumerative description.

Of late, a number of more individualistic studies of the regional geography of Canada have appeared. Those that most effectively portray and interpret the prairie-parkland in its Canadian setting are the works by J. Howard Richards, J. Wreford Watson, Louis-Edmond Hamelin, W. R. Mead and E. H. Brown and J. H. Paterson. Richards and Watson provide by far the most thorough and comprehensive discussions of the regional geography of the prairie-parkland. Hamelin's approach to Canadian regionalization is fresh and effective, but unfortunately his discussion of the prairie-parkland is brief. Mead and Brown try to capture the essential qualities of the regional economy and landscape, while Paterson elucidates characteristics of the Canadian prairie-parkland by comparison with the American plains. All of these studies reflect a more sound approach to regional geography and, although essentially textbook in nature, succeed in filling a gap in Canadian studies that until recently was almost completely neglected.

With the exception of texts, there have been few studies concerned solely with the regional geography of the prairie-parkland. Only three booklength studies have been produced. One of these, *Die Prärieprovinzen Kanadas; Der Wandel der Kulturlandschaft von der Kolonisation bis zur Gegenwart unter dum Einfluss der Industrie*, emphasizes the contemporary geography.[62] Published by the German geographer Karl Lenz in 1965, it has been recognized as "the outstanding geographical interpretation of the Prairie Provinces," and one which "will not be superseded until many more detailed research findings are published, which will provide new data for a synthesis at a deeper level of explanation."[63] Lenz attempts a complete geography of the prairie-parkland. As in most geographical studies of the region, the emphasis is upon colonization and settlement. Unfortunately, the book has yet to be published in English and has not, in consequence, reached as wide an audience as it deserves.

The two remaining book-length studies are works in historical geography. John Warkentin's *The Western Interior of Canada, A Record of Geographical Discovery* 1612-1917,[64] traces the evolution of geographical knowledge of the Western Interior by presenting a selection of excerpts from the writings of travellers and explorers. Different stages in changing attitudes toward, and comprehension of, the physical geography of the region and its resources are recognized. Throughout, Warkentin liberally interprets and judiciously links selected primary accounts in a manner that clearly establishes the unfolding of our knowledge of the land. Eric Ross in *Beyond the River and the Bay*[65] reconstructs the geography of the Canadian Northwest as it was in 1811. The book is idiosyncratic in approach in that synthesis is achieved via an imaginary author, whose account of the area is limited to the knowledge available at the time. The resultant geographical cross-section is skillfully put together, but is considerably less lucid than had Ross, writing as a geographer equipped with a modern understanding of the area, applied himself to the task. What is lacking in this respect, however, is made up for by the flavour of the time captured in this delightful period picture.

Studies in the periodical literature that adopt a regional approach are similarly limited in number. Warkentin has reconstructed the regional geography of Western Canada in 1886 wherein the region is subdivided into a number of units based upon settlement patterns and land use characteristics.[66] Nine settled regions set within a nearly empty, and intervening, tenth region are distinguished at this critical time in the settlement of the prairie-parkland. Nelson has examined man-land relations within the region during the nineteenth century in order to ascertain the modifications to the physical landscape caused by man.[67] Recently, Clark has offered some broad historical and geographical views,[68] and Laycock has discussed the regional resource base.[69] Both studies deal with the implications that might attend a political union of the three prairie provinces. Publications relating to sub-regions of the prairie-parkland include Wonders on the Peace River country,[70] Warkentin on the Dauphin area of Manitoba[71] and Nicholson on the regions of southern Alberta.[72]

By far the largest number of geographical publications relating to the prairie-parkland are concerned with the systematic elements of its human geography. Outstanding among studies of this nature have been those in settlement geography. Rural settlement has received the most attention from geographers and, among them, studies of ethnic settlement have been most prominent.[73] A continued interest in the frontiers of settlement is also manifest in the literature.[74] Research on rural service centres and patterns of urbanization in the prairie-parkland has been attracting increased attention in the regional universities.[75] However, there have been surprisingly few publications on the agricultural geography of the region.[76] Work in industrial geography has been even less prominent,[77] while only a handful of studies have been conducted in political, population and transport geography.[78] A few studies in recreation geography have recently appeared.[79]

As in geography elsewhere, the number of studies concerned with testing hypotheses in theoretical geography has increased, and quantification in all empirical studies has intensified.[80] There is currently, in consequence, a growing dichotomy in the regional literature. At one pole there are the descriptive studies concerned with the particular and the unique in the prairie-parkland and, at the other, there are those studies wherein the prairie-parkland has been used as a laboratory in the search for universal regularities. The former are still by far the most numerous in the literature of the region, but it is apparent that the latter will occupy a more prominent place in geographical research in the future. However, there will undoubtedly be few direct relationships between this type of research and interpretations of this unique region.

The advent of professional geography to the region has been accompanied by a fundamental research achievement of significance not only to geographers but to all scholars concerned with the three Prairie Provinces, especially those with regional interests. This outstanding achievement has been the production, in collaboration with provincial government authorities, of three provincial atlases. The first provincial atlas in the region was the *Economic Atlas of Manitoba*, edited by T. R. Weir at The University of Manitoba and published in 1960.[81] This pioneer production was followed by the *Atlas of Saskatchewan* in 1969,[82] and the *Atlas of Alberta* in the same year,[83] produced at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, and the University of Alberta, respectively. In terms of cartography alone, or in combinations of maps and textual material, all three comprise summaries and interpretations of the geography of the provinces and constitute the most comprehensive and detailed reference on geographical distributions within the prairie-parkland. Recently T. R. Weir has published a more generalized *Atlas of the Prairie Provinces*,[84] providing a succinct overview of selected features of the physical and human geography.

A unique achievement in atlas-making is the *Historical Atlas of Manitoba*, published in 1970 and devised and edited by John Warkentin and Richard I. Ruggles.[85] This most comprehensive historical atlas contains over three hundred facsimile maps, plans and sketches, and is abundantly supported by the commentaries of the two editors. The purpose of the atlas, which it clearly achieves, is to illuminate the historical and geographical development of the present area of Manitoba.

Finally, it should be observed that a large number of theses, most of which examine facets of the geography of the prairie-parkland, have been produced within the past ten years in the graduate schools of the regional universities. Some of this research has already had an impact on the geographical literature. Much of it has been via *The Albertan Geographer*, an annual journal produced by the graduate students of the University of Alberta since 1964-65 with an editorial policy favouring research on the region. Thus, impedimenta to geographical research in this part of Canada have largely disappeared during the past two decades, and recent achievements at the prairie-parkland universities should provide a firm basis upon which future work can build.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Arthur S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71 Toronto*, 1939, p. 1.

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[6] John Macoun, quoted in T. R. Weir, "Pioneer Settlement of Southwest Manitoba, 1889 to 1901," *The Canadian Geographer*, Vol. VIII, 1964, p. 64.

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[28] Paul Morand, quoted in André Siegfried, *Canada*, London, 1937, p. 140.

[29] Arleigh H. Laycock, "How Union Would Affect the Development of Natural Resources," in D. K. Elton, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

[30] J. Howard Richards, *op. cit.*, p. 420.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 421.

[32] Arleigh H. Laycock, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

[33] J. Howard Richards, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 418.

[35] Donald P. Kerr, "Metropolitan Dominance in Canada," in John Warkentin, *op. cit.*, pp. 549-550.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 550

[37] J. Wreford Watson, "Canada's Geography and Geographies of Canada," *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[38] Ronald Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[39] W. R. Mead and E. H. Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-345.

[40] Ronald Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[41] *Loc. cit.*

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3

ARCHAEOLOGY AND PREHISTORY: THE SASKATCHEWAN CASE

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That the Canadian plains area, bounded roughly by the 49th and the 60th parallels, and the Rockies and the Shield, should be proposed as a region for interdisciplinary study need not bother anybody, except archaeologists who may see some incongruity in relying on recent and ancient criteria simultaneously, especially if there is no apparent relationship between the artificial and the natural boundaries. Those who have studied the American plains (*Mulloy* 1952, *Wedel* 1961, 1964) may regard such a separation as a parody of a game, where children pin a tail on a donkey, since it would make the Canadian plains a tail that really cannot wag unless stuck to the American plains. In Canada a few may regard an ancient botanical difference between grassland and parkland more relevant to prehistoric human ecology (*Mayer-Oakes* 1967*a*); others may seek a more Canadian flavour in prehistory by moving northward away from the American border (*Pohorecky & Anderson* 1968); and some may object to splitting the personality of the plains at the 49th parallel (*Wormington & Forbis* 1965), especially since the Missouri Valley, which sets Saskatchewan apart from its southern neighbors, was outflanked by ancient cultures from the west (*called Plano*) that spread throughout the prairie-plains grasslands of Wyoming, Montana, Alberta and Saskatchewan (*Spencer, Jennings et al* 1965), and by ancient cultures from the east (*called Aqua-Plano*) that occupied the lakeside forest of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Manitoba and Saskatchewan (*Quimby* 1965).

Some archaeologists, then, may be tempted to reject the notion of a Canadian plains area as a mixed-up political-geological bastard. On the other hand, other archaeologists in Canada may only wish to modify its meaning, taking into account some political realities that affect the conduct of their work. For instance, American-trained archaeologists (*and there are few other kinds in Canada*) may be advised to respect the 49th parallel, especially if they are American imports. Rejecting political fences, even when writing prehistory, can invite charges of American domination over Canadian archaeology, evident within the past decade when politicians like Hazen Argue of Saskatchewan levelled harsh accusations in Parliament against a distinguished archaeologist with the National Museum in Ottawa, largely based on the American citizenship

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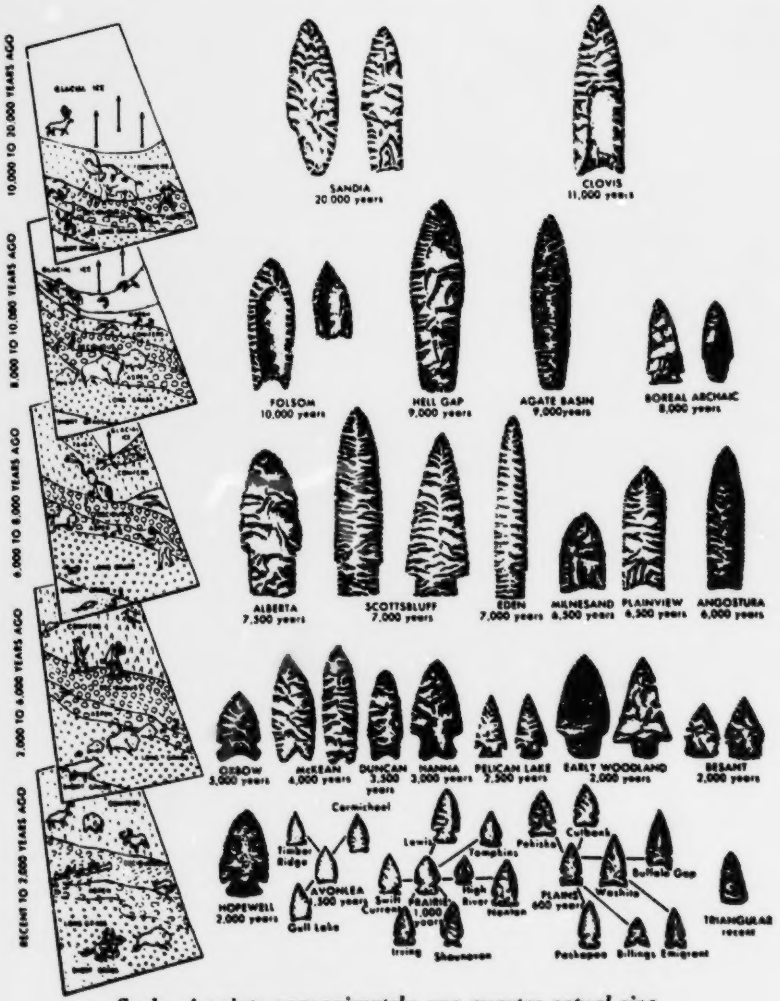
of the accused who was studying the origins of plant cultivation in Mexico, and the ensuing controversy hurt even Canadian-born archaeologists who had done good work in Canada (*Lee* 1954, 1955, 1956). Of course, some touchy patriots can even detect a plot to swallow Canadian identity in an American classification of all prehistoric cultures on the continent (*Willey & Phillips* 1958), and this is silly, but it does not help to explain that archaeology came to Canada only after World War II from America, where it had blossomed before World War I in the Southwest and boomed across the plains during the Depression, because it is hard for some Canadians to admit being baby brother if big brother happens to be American. The bias is not personal, but political, and potent.

Nor does it help to distinguish between science and politics, explaining that the names of spearpoints are not political even if they do refer to American landmarks, because it is hard to call hundreds of points in Canada by American names and not begin to imagine a big sponge soaking up an emergent Canadian indentity for an American computer programme. This may be most evident in the so-called Canadian Plains area, where most of the ancient cultures were baptised in the midwestern states (*see fig.* 1). American names apply to all early projectile points, except the Alberta type, which was named where it was first recognized (*Wormington* 1957) rather than after the Wyoming site where it was first found (*Roberts 1943*). Yuma points were named after a county in Colorado (*Gebhard* 1949) and Cody points were named after a place in Wyoming (*Jepsen* 1951). Other type stations include: Sandia Cave, New Mexico (*Hibben* 1941); Clovis, New Mexico (*Howard* 1935, *Cotter* 1937, 1938); Folsom, New Mexico (*Cook* 1927, *Figgins* 1927); Angostura, South Dakota (*Hughes* 1948); Plainview, Texas (*Sellards, Evans & Meade* 1947); Midland, Texas (*Wendorf, Krieger, Albritton & Stewart* 1955); Eden, Wyoming (*Howard, Satterthwaite & Bache* 1941, *Howard* 1943); Agate Basin, Wyoming (*Roberts* 1943); Hell Gap, Wyoming (*Agogino* 1961, *Agogino & Galloway* 1965); Scottsbluff, Nebraska (*Barbour & Schultz* 1932); and Milnesand, New Mexico (*Sellards* 1955). Even later McKean (*Mulloy* 1954), Duncan and Hanna points (*Wheeler* 1954) have type stations in Wyoming.

One result of such naming is that comparable points in Canada, lacking C-14 dates or geological context, may be regarded, if not comparable in age, then older in the United States. The typological bias, which weights type stations too much by regarding them possible centres of origin, may overlook a postulated migration pattern (*Haynes* 1966) where Clovis types would have to be at least as old in Saskatchewan as at the type station in New Mexico, and may neglect the fact that the area north of Saskatoon was habitable during interstadial intervals (*Pohorecky & Anderson* 1968, *Pohorecky* 1969, *Pohorecky & Wilson* 1968) by interpreting a map of ice frontal positions (*Christiansen* 1965*b*) to mean that

1. POINT TYPES IN SASKATCHEWAN


10,000 TO 20,000 YEARS AGO
8,000 TO 10,000 YEARS AGO
6,000 TO 8,000 YEARS AGO
2,000 TO 6,000 YEARS AGO
RECENT TO 2,000 YEARS AGO
GLACIAL ICE
SANDIA
20,000 years
CLOVIS
11,000 years
FOLSOM
10,000 years
HELL GAP
9,000 years
AGATE BASIN
9,000years
BOREAL ARCHAIC
8,000 years
ALBERTA
7,500 years
SCOTTSBLUFF
7,000 years
EDEN
7,000 years
MILNESAND
6,500 years
PLAINVIEW
6,500 years
ANGOSTURA
6,000 years
OXBOW
5,000 years
McKEAN
4,000 years
DUNCAN
3,500 years
HANNA
3,000 years
PELICAN LAKE
2,500 years
EARLY WOODLAND
2,000 years
BESANT
2,000 years
HOPEWELL
2,000 years
Timber Ridge
Carmichael
AVONLEA
1,500 years
Gull Lake
Swift Current
Lewis
PRAIRIE
1,000 years
Tompkins
High River
Nanton
Irvine
Shaunavon
Pekisko
Culbank
PLAINS
600 years
Washita
Buffalo Gap
Paskapoo
Billings
Emigrant
TRIANGULAR
recent

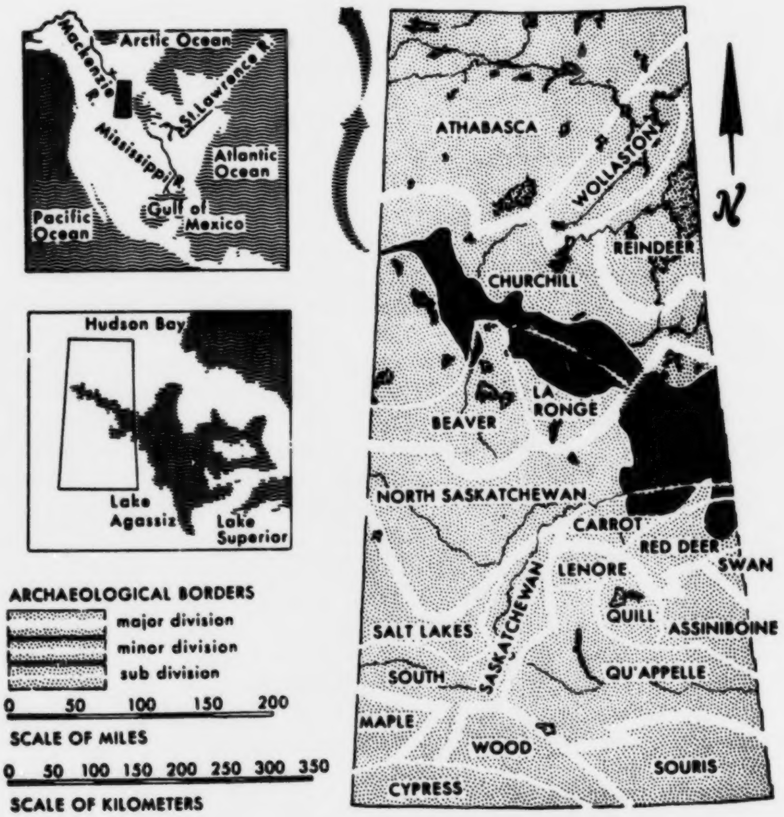
Scale of points approximately one quarter actual size.
(All figures in this chapter are from Pohorecky 1970)

virtually everything north of Regina was closed to early man during the Ice Age (*Kehoe* 1966). The Alberta type, then, need not be older in Canada, just as the Plainview type need not be older in the United States, regardless of where type stations may be, although an American bias may have favoured greater antiquity for early man around the type stations in the southern plains, while a Canadian bias may have reacted by favouring greater antiquity in the parkland zone, drawing archaeologists northward where a Canadian identity may be more genuine, as evidenced by the distinctive rock art already isolated in the boreal Shield of Canada (*Dewdney & Kidd* 1967, *Pohorecky & Jones* 1968, 1970, *Pohorecky n.d.*), since archaeology in the grassland plains area, which occurs mainly in the United States where archaeology flourished for decades before anything like it happened in Canada, is primarily American, not Canadian.

Similarly, coastal archaeology in southwestern British Columbia has more in common with Washington than with Alberta, so shrugging off the grassland plains area as already lost to American archaeologists may result in a desirable loss for Saskatchewan archaeology in order to redirect its attention northward into the mixed woodland zone (*see fig.* 2) which probably attracted more kinds of culture in prehistoric times than the grassland ever did (*Pohorecky & Anderson* 1968). The *Canadian Plains*, then, may refer mainly to the zones north of the grassland plains. On the other hand, the 49th parallel may be substituted by the southern limits of the North Saskatchewan and Qu'Appelle drainage basins (*see fig.* 3), since hydrographic features have marked off territories occupied by various tribes (*Lowie* 1910, *Mandelbaum* 1940, *Wallis* 1947). However, this kind of natural boundary does coincide generally with the botanical one, which is particularly ancient between the grassland and parkland zones, and which may be even more suitable for defining a prehistoric natural-cultural area that may be called *Canadian Plains*. Plants have not only provided resources for cultural development but also set ecological limits, so it may be ecologically meaningful to de-emphasize the thinly populated grasslands, which barely exist in Manitoba and occupy only a small southern portion of Saskatchewan, and to emphasize the more densely populated parklands and forested plains farther north.

More recent natural zones need not have a priority over recent political units, for archaeological purposes, since current natural-cultural areas (*Kroeber* 1939) may be more relevant to ethnology than to archaeology (*Quimby* 1954, 1955, *Aschmann* 1955), and not enough is yet known to reconstruct continental schemes of prehistoric environments (*Mayer-Oakes* 1967*a*). If political boundaries are relevant to archaeology in Canada, then provincial ones must be recognized as more important than federal ones, because antiquities legislation has been fragmented within the past generation into provincial jurisdictions, no matter how ungrateful it may seem to those who pioneered archaeology in the prairie provinces

2. GLACIAL LAKE AGASSIZ AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BORDERS BASED ON DRAINAGE BASINS IN SASKATCHEWAN


Arctic Ocean
Mackenzie R.
St. Lawrence R.
Mississippi R.
Atlantic Ocean
Pacific Ocean
Gulf of Mexico
Hudson Bay
Lake Agassiz
Lake Superior
ARCHAEOLOGICAL BORDERS
major division
minor division
sub division
0 50 100 150 200
SCALE OF MILES
0 50 100 150 200 250 300 350
SCALE OF KILOMETERS
N
ATHABASCA
WOLLASTON
REINDEER
CHURCHILL
LA RONGE
BEAVER
NORTH SASKATCHEWAN
CARROT
RED DEER
SWAN
LENORE
QUILL
ASSINIBOINE
SALT LAKES
SASKATCHEWAN
SOUTH
QU'APPELLE
MAPLE
WOOD
SOURIS
CYPRESS

from the National Museum in Ottawa (*Nickerson* 1912-1915, *MacNeish* 1954, 1956, 1958). From the position of a dirt archaeologist, only a province can enact laws to protect antiquities on its crown lands, and it can grant funds needed to equip, supply, transport, feed, house and pay the crews he recruits, trains and directs. It supports facilities like the C-14 lab on the Saskatoon campus, and controls an educational system that can foster archaeology. By the same token, prehistory is relevant to a province, since prehistory is for the living, who regard archaeology as a public service that merits public support.

Public interest should not be alienated by prehistorians, who may dwell at levels of abstraction above digging for what is digested, and who may doubt whether a provincial boundary is relevant to the study of ancient cultures that were adapted to ecological zones extending beyond the province. Even geographers (*Richards n.d.*) indicate that many ecological zones have been no more stable in the past than political boundaries. A recent atlas (*Richards & Fung* 1969) is devoted to Saskatchewan, whose boundary crosscuts natural zones, but whose personality is explored in so much detail and in so many dimensions that fresh insights are yielded even to those who are familiar with the landscape. A comparable volume about Saskatchewan prehistory may also appeal to the feelings of citizens who can see the past literally lying beneath their feet, like a family ghost in a European castle, haunting a land with a story to be told. The use of provincial boundaries to define the scope of archaeological studies has precedents in Alberta (*Wormington & Forbis* 1965, *Bliss & Hayes* 1937), Manitoba (*Mayer-Oakes* 1967*b*, *Rlady* 1952, *Vickers* 1949) and British Columbia (*Borden* 1954, *Pickford* 1947, *Newcomb* 1929, *Hill-Tout* 1895) as well as states like: Ohio (*Fowke* 1902); Nebraska (*Strong* 1935); Illinois (*Cole & Deuel* 1937); Oregon (*Cressman, Williams & Krieger* 1940); Minnesota (*Wilford* 1944, 1945, 1950, 1955); North Dakota (*Will & Hecker* 1944); Wyoming (*Jepsen* 1951); Tennessee (*Lewis* 1953); Texas (*Suhm & Krieger* 1954); Kentucky (*Thompson* 1954); Iowa (*Parsons* 1962); and California (*Baumhoff* 1963, *Davis* 1961, *Heizer* 1941). In accord with legal jurisdictions provided by provincial antiquities legislation, it may be most appropriate to focus on Saskatchewan here, especially since the province is located centrally among the prairie provinces, encompasses most of the non-grassland Canadian plains, and has had very little written yet about its archaeology and prehistory.

Science marches on, unlike Time, as long as somebody pays for its travel and tells it where to go, so it is noteworthy that archaeology was not going anywhere in Saskatchewan until almost 50 years after the province had been founded, because few paid anything (*not even attention*) to it. The few notable exceptions began shortly after the province was formed in 1905, when Montgomery (1908) found, dug and described some burial mounds. An ethnologist (*Skinner* 1914) visited the province just before World War I and made some notes on the Plain Cree, but did not undertake any archaeological work. During the twenties, a geologist (*Parks* 1925) reported some artifacts that were associated with the remains of an extinct mammal. However, it was not until 1935 that an intellectual élite of dedicated amateurs formed the Saskatoon Archaeological Society, and reported the skeletal remains of a human near Bradwell in central Saskatchewan (*Edmunds, Jackson, Spinks & Vigfusson* 1938), while a northerner (*Downes* 1938) reported some pottery around Reindeer Lake, and a southerner (*Howard* 1939) reported some Folsom points in southern Saskatchewan. One of the first syntheses of Saskatchewan prehistory (*Roberts* 1939) was attempted before World War II, but it was lost among the midwestern states whose prehistory was better known. Subsequent attempts to focus on the Canadian prairies were relegated to school books (*Orchard* 1942, 1946) describing so-called kitchen middens, so amateurs (*Gunn* 1947) and others (*Leechman* 1954) began to report unusual specimens, while historic sites surveys began (*John Archer in* 1948, *and Jack Herbert in* 1951).

Private museums had been set up by collectors (*like Fred Hill of Riverhurst*) who had accumulated the arrowheads which many farmers had harvested instead of wheat during the dustbowl years, but it was only a hobby for persons who knew so little about archaeology that some believed it was a religious sect. It was upon such a scene of innocence that the pioneer of Saskatchewan archaeology, Boyd Wettlaufer, arrived like a prophet in 1951. While surveying private collections of spear-points in Saskatchewan (*Wettlaufer* 1951), he converted a handful of amateurs into apostles of archaeology, and transformed some high-level provincial authorities into the first high priests of an archaeology-to-be.

Then, with a rather dramatic flourish of trowels, the first archaeological excavation in the province was launched near Mortlach (*Wettlaufer* 1955), armed with public funds to celebrate the province's 50th anniversary. The chosen site was appropriately layered like a birthday cake, yielding the remains of seven so-called cultures sandwiched within a series of soil zones. The cultural sequence was found to span 3,400 years, confirmed by a C-14 date, and the individual cultures were named after local landmarks like *Besant* and *Pelican Lake*. The report claimed all kinds of firsts. Bedecked with blue ribbons, it marked a productive entry into prehistory, and laid the foundations for more political action to promote archaeology.

Aware of growing public interest in the archaeological potential of the province, a power corporation and a provincial department allocated funds in 1957 to rescue a site in the Long Creek Valley (*Wettlaufer* 1957, *Wettlaufer & Mayer-Oakes* 1960) which was to be flooded by the construction of Boundary Dam near Estevan. The investment was rewarded with the naming of cultures like *Avonlea* and *Oxbow* after towns in the province, and with a sequence of eight cultures extending over 5,000 years. Caught up in this were other scientists (*McCorquodale 1957*, *Nero* 1957*a*, 1957*b*, 1959, *Nero & McCorquodale* 1958), but the prophet left, leaving his amateur apostles (*Cronk* 1956, 1957, 1958) to carry on the work just barely begun.

Federal involvement began in 1958. A federal-provincial agreement to construct dams that would flood 110,000 acres along 475 miles of shoreline of the reservoir (*Mayer-Oakes* 1958). In accord with a cost-sharing deal, federal and provincial funds were available for salvage archaeology here in 1959 and 1960 (*Mayer-Oakes* 1959, *Pohorecky & Mayer-Oakes* 1959, *Pohorecky* 1959), Hundreds of sites were recorded in the rugged and thinly populated region, and work was particularly productive in the third season, even after an abortive attempt had been male to reallocate salvage funds to a site near Gull Lake. The blunder set Saskatchewan archaeology back more than it had hitherto advanced, making a critical turning point in provincial support; and withdrawal of provincial funds in 1961 forced withdrawal of federal funds.

The decision to abandon the project so prematurely was recommended by a curator, hired in 1959 by the Regina museum. He claimed nothing worthwhile was to be found there. Centralizing authority for archaeology in Saskatchewan around his office, and referring to the 1960 Antiquities Act, he also claimed to police collectors who might ruin sites by digging for treasures, like pot hunters who killed buffalo for the hump, and compiled a file on sites reported to his office. Centralizing almost everything, sometimes without co-ordinating anything, backfired even in 1960, when he hired all crews for all projects in the province, and then put all of them at a site where they were not supposed to be. Most quit, spreading bad news about how things were being run there.

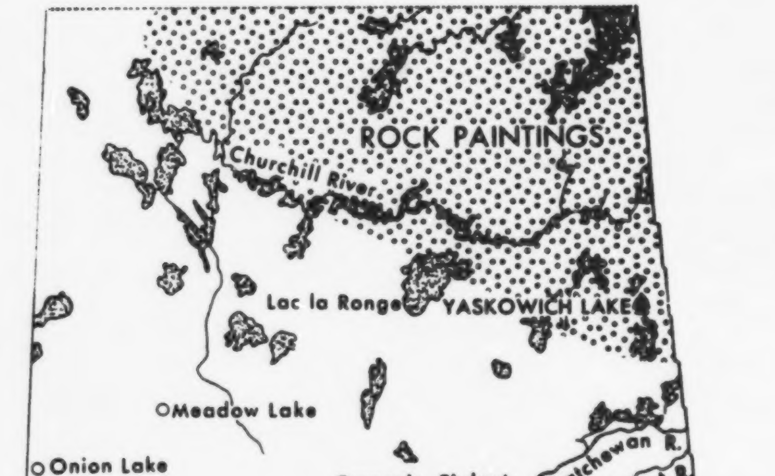
Meanwhile, archaeology thrived in Manitoba, where people cluster along its southern border, dominated by one city whose universities and museum can justify the single archaeological centre represented by the provincial society in Winnipeg. Such centralization is not consistent with the demography of the other prairie provinces, where people, dispersed over vast rural areas, are served in Alberta by Edmonton and Calgary, and in Saskatchewan by Regina and Saskatoon. A call from Regina to centralize archaeology in the province, then, may have sounded like a papal edict to protestant ears in Saskatoon, and even the creation of the Saskatchewan Archaeological Society in 1963 brought no renaissance.

By 1965, a real renaissance began after the establishment of an academic department of anthropology and archaeology at the University in Saskatoon during 1964, alongside comparable departments set up in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Calgary. It also enabled Saskatoon's amateurs to celebrate their society's 30th anniversary by attracting such archaeologists as Borden, Forbis, MacNeish, Mayer-Oakes and Taylor to speak on campus. Historic sites archaeology was also boosted in 1965 when work began on the reconstruction of Fort Carlton and Moose Mountain to commemorate the Mounties during Canada's centennial, following earlier work at the Francois-Finlay post near Nipawin, and complementing similar federal projects in Manitoba and Alberta. The provincial historic sites programme was resurrected (*Seivewright* 1969) to support work at Fort à la Corne, Isaac's House, Cumberland House, Henry Frobisher Fort, Peter Pond's Post (Prince Albert), Pine Island Forts, South Branch House, Fort Riviere Tremblante, Fort Alexandria, Chesterfield House, Fort Pelly, Fort Pitt, Hudson House, Pierre Belleau's House, and Last Mountain House. Also in 1965, a nationwide campaign was launched to rescue a 400-ton rock from a reservoir where, it may be recalled, nothing worthwhile was supposed to be although over 1,000 artifacts had been found around the sacred Cree stone in 1960 (*Pohorecky* 1965, 1966*abc*).

Since the great buffalo-shaped boulder, called *Mistaseni* or *Mistussine*, was one of the largest erratics in Saskatchewan (*Kupsch* 1963) that had been pin-pointed on a map in 1858 by an explorer (*Hind* 1860) who noted praying in the vicinity, the crusade sparked the public imagination. Questions about its fate were raised in Parliament by Diefenbaker, after whom the reservoir was named. School children donated to *Operation Mistaseni*; a song was composed about its legend (*Howard* 1966); a *Mistaseni Night* benefit concert featured Buffy Saint-Marie, Dick Gregory and Cree dancers; but all debate about pagan symbols and costs became academic when the monument was blown up, showing up the weakness of antiquities legislation. In its place, archaeology became an academic subject in public schools; a model of the rock was put in a museum; and public funds were spent to cement pieces of the blasted stone into a historic site marker near Elbow. The most fitting epilogue (*Sluman* 1967) was provided by the Cree who had archaeologists move the remains of Chief Poundmaker from a historic site in Alberta to Cutknife Hill in Saskatchewan, flaunting the laws that did not save Mistaseni, and using fragments of the rock to mark the new grave, as a Cree project paid by federal centennial funds.

Limited provincial funds for archaeology were used by the Regina museum for a few modest projects, and by a historic sites branch for a modest programme. Amateurs continued to study collections (*Hedger* 1968) and landmarks (*Klaus* 1968). A 4,100 year old Oxbow site near Moon Lake was dug by the Dyck family in 1966, since no salvage funds had been set aside for the highway work that threatened the site. A historic fort, to be flooded near Kamsack, was rescued at the outset in 1967, not by provincial funds, but by a neighboring province, in spite of legal jurisdiction (*MacKie* 1968). Work by university archaeologists in

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN SASKATCHEWAN


ROCK PAINTINGS
Churchill River
Lac la Ronge
YASKOWICH LAKE
Meadow Lake
Onion Lake
Saskatchewan R.
Carrot R.
Francois-Finlay's Post
Arborfield
Peter Pond's Fort
Manchester House
Pine Island
Fort à la Corne
ARMIT RIVER
Fort Carlton
Melfort
North Saskatchewan River
Battleford
Bjorkdale
Cutknife
Rock Haven
Pathlow
Porcupine Plain
SASKATOON
Tipperary Creek
MOON LAKE
DERR-DREW
Arran
Kamsack
BLACKSTRAP
HERMANSON
COTEAU CREEK
Fort Rivière Tremblante
Last Mountain Lake
Chesterfield House
Elbow
Yorkton
AIKTOW
PROUD
MIDDEN LAKE
Kyle
Riverhurst
MISTASENI
Last Mountain House
Prelate
South Sask. R.
Lebret
Crooked Lake
Cabri
GHOST COULEE
Qu'Appelle
SWIFT CURRENT CREEK
Moose Jaw
Regina
Assiniboine River
MORTLACH
STONY BEACH
Avonlea
Great Sand Hills
WALTER FELT
Souris River
Weyburn
Halbrite
GULL LAKE
Woodrow
McCord
OXBOW
LONG CREEK
Glen Ewen
BUFFALO GAP

Key: *arrowhead indicates prehistoric site*
circle represents major surface collection site
flag-and-fort shows historic site excavation
skull marks rescued burial site

Saskatoon was never aided by provincial grants, but instead by federal agencies like Canada Council, National Museum and National Research Council. Provincial authorities budgeted nothing for salvage archaeology in a multimillion dollar reservoir south of Saskatoon, and when aid was requested to recover 4,000 year old artifacts from the reservoir, the provincial treasurer turned it down.

Of course, provincial authorities can only do what the law and the budget may let them do. When it was learned that the streets of Cumberland House were being paved with human skulls, mixed with gravel from an Indian cemetery, the minister in 1967 immediately ordered the workers to find gravel elsewhere. On another occasion, he had the largest gallery of rock art declared a protected area as soon as he learned that prospectors were dynamiting around there. The law and the budget should let provincial authorities do more, because nonrenewable archaeological resources are being destroyed at an accelerating rate by bigger bulldozers on bigger jobs than ever before. For instance, in 1968, a multimillion dollar highway project in Saskatoon had nothing allocated for archaeological salvage, so volunteers from the university had to step in and work at the celebrated Saskatoon Site, which yielded bones of extinct mammoth, horse and camel (*Lammers* 1968) associated with human artifacts (*Pohorecky & Wilson*, 1968, *Pohorecky* 1969 in sand deposits over 34,000 years old (*Christiansen* 1968). The rescued site opened new vistas for Saskatchewan archaeology, since the specimens were among the oldest in the New World and farther north in the province than may have been dreamed possible by the visionary who had been excited by artifacts 3,400 years old at Mortlach only 14 years before.

During the brief history of Saskatchewan archaeology, peaks have coincided with such political celebrations as the province's 50th anniversary (1955), a federal-provincial agreement (1958), and the nation's centennial (1967). In the valleys between its fortunes have been fostered by the formation of archaeological societies in Saskatoon (1935), Regina (1943) and Saskatchewan (1963). The formation of a council for Canadian archaeology (1967) and a Canadian archaeological association (1968) reflected not only federal austerity budgets but also a growing awareness that the prehistory uncovered by archaeology in Canada was part of the heritage of all Canadians, and that it was being lost more rapidly than ever, in spite of existing laws, which had never even been used to prosecute anybody in Canada.

The root of the problem, which makes current laws a tangled farce, is that antiquities can be privately owned (*Pohorecky* 1969). It perpetuates a hoax which lets cynics taunt that the weak and uncoordinated laws are good enough to pacify those who can profit from the possession of antiquities. Laws, which are based on the premise that antiquities can be bought, cannot effectively combat the rising tide of destruction that threatens them. Even customs officials can still regard some antiquities as just rocks, letting them drain duty-free into a market down south. Antiquities are defined as inalienably public property in most civilized countries, including Mexico, but not Canada or the United States. By default, antiquities in Canada have become items of commercial or scientific interests only to collectors or scientists who can exploit them for personal gain by negotiating with the owner of the land on which such items occur, so antiquities on privately owned land can never be protected by laws which assume that rights to such objects are on par with alienable mineral rights.

Nor are antiquities on crown lands adequately protected, since laws that forbid violations against them cannot be enforced on unpoliced lands, especially if it cannot be proven that the objects did not come from private land. No law yet requires a citizen to report antiquities or to catalogue the ones collected in a way that shows where they were found, although such a law would make more sense. Also, a province should assume some financial responsibility for the rescue of antiquities from crown lands, and contractors should pay a fair share of the cost of rescuing antiquities which their work may destroy. At a municipal level, where people may care about things in their backyard, it would be misleading to assure municipal taxpayers that the province, by whose grace municipalities exist, already handles antiquities adequately with a law that applies only to crown lands. It would also be misleading to suggest that civic support for archaeology may hike mill rates, because the cost is minuscule to a city, and a rural region can set *per capita* limits on local aid. The dearth of antiquities legislation at the municipal level is appalling, since the B.N.A. Act allows federal, provincial and municipal jurisdictions, wherever applicable.

PREHISTORY OF SASKATCHEWAN

The human past on the Canadian plains, where Saskatchewan is centrally located, is grounded in great antiquity, much of it awaiting discovery, but with enough already uncovered to indicate the intercontinental scope of the panorama which began over 40,000 years ago (*Chard* 1959, 1963, *Krieger* 1964, *Lanning & Patterson* 1967, *Menghin* 1963) when people entered America from Asia by way of a 1200-mile wide bridge of land now submerged at Bering Strait (*McCown* 1940). Tracking giant animals through the Great Plains that stretch from the Arctic Coast to the Caribbean, the earliest immigrants followed an ice-free inland corridor along the Mackenzie Valley (*MacNeish* 1963) to Lake Athabasca.

By the time of Columbus, about a million people, split into over 350 tribes, lived in North America (*Kroeber* 1934), with only a small fraction living on the Canadian plains. The percentage could have been higher during the Ice Age, since climate of deglaciation in the northern hemisphere (*Zeuner* 1959) would have provided humans with milder winters and cooler summers than those heralded by the onset of deglaciation 25,000 years ago. The final glacial advances and retreats of the Wisconsin cycle (*Flint* 1957) left most of Saskatchewan a land of glacial lakes (*Edmunds* 1962, *Christiansen* 1956, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1965*ab*). Therefore, much of the history of deglaciation is derived from the study of glacial lakes and their spillways (*Kupsch* 1969), whose lake deposits now yield some of the best farming land in the prairie provinces. Even the saline lake country of central Saskatchewan (*Rawson & Moore* 1944) attracted many animals. Mammoths ranged as far as Saskatoon (*Lammers* 1968) during an interstadial interval over 34,000 years ago (*Christiansen* 1968), and man was there (*Pohorecky & Wilson* 1968), long before the ice sheets finally retreated.

The final retreat of glacial meltwater was marked most dramatically by the flooding of the largest glacial lake in the world. Glacial Lake Agassiz began to form about 12,000 years ago, reaching its apogee 10,000 years ago, when it spilled over most of Manitoba, and parts of Saskatchewan, Ontario, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota (*Elson* 1957, 1967). No more than 80,000 square miles were flooded at any one time, although about 200,000 square miles of land were inundated during its 4,000 year life span, when, in a continental context, the drainages and outlets of Lake Agassiz virtually quartered North America. The first to drain were waters in the Dakotas and Minnesota (*Brophy* 1967, *Matsch & Wright* 1967, *Cvancara* 1967, *Winter* 1967). They spilled into the Mississippi River and on into the Gulf of Mexico. The eastern outlets around Lake Nipigon (*Zoltai* 1967) are now inactive, but once spilled flood-waters in sequence from a flooded northwestern Ontario (*Nikiforoff* 1947) into Lake Superior, through the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, eventually reaching the Atlantic Ocean. The northern outlets let flood-waters flow through the Mackenzie River into the Arctic Ocean, and through the Churchill River into Hudson Bay. Rivers still flow across Saskatchewan from the Rockies into the Manitoba basin, and the Qu'Appelle-Souris-Assiniboine system still empties into Lake Winnipeg or, when its spring crest meets that of the Red River, into Lake Manitoba.

The Two Creeks Interstadial intervened 12,000 to 11,000 years ago between the Mankato and Valders substages in the United States (*Quimby* 1965). This coincided with a warmer boreal climate in eastern Saskatchewan 10,500 years ago (*Ritchie* 1967). Newly deglaciated land in the region was probably covered by a tundra or prairie type of flora that soon gave way to encroaching forest (*Love* 1959). A number of vegetation zones met in the area (*Shay* 1967). These were apparently compacted along the southern rim of the Agassiz Channel, which cut Saskatchewan in half during the second Campbell Phase 10,000 years ago, reaching from

Porcupine Hills in Manitoba to Clearwater River in Alberta. Mammoths grazed on grasslands and mastodons browsed in forested swamps (*Gross* 1951); the coexistence of their remains throughout central Saskatchewan suggests a possible coexistence of these species in the many micro-environments that abounded in the lake country fringing Lake Agassiz. By 7,300 years ago, all that remained of the Agassiz Channel was a series of 55 successively lower-level shorelines.

Early man certainly did occupy Saskatchewan even before this great deluge, as indicated by 34,000-year old finds at the Saskatoon Site. Varieties of the pyramidal *Saskatoon* point type may bear some technological similarity to Middle and Upper Palaeolithic Traditions of the Old World. This may indirectly add credence to one view (*Bryan* 1965, 1968, 1969) suggesting that all American point styles evolved south of the ice sheets from a large leaf-shaped point which had evolved from an Old World handaxe tradition. The key area here would have been the Canadian plains, where early men did adjust eventually to a variety of environments and ways of life. Furthermore, some very small but *Sandia-like* specimens are like the type that is between 15,000 and 25,000 years old in the American Southwest, although the uni-shouldered points or blades in Saskatchewan may be far more recent. These curious specimens were found near Agassiz beaches and in one case directly within a shoreline of Lake Agassiz, at Armit River, suggesting that the Lower Campbell Beach there may have formed long before the Agassiz climax, which is marked by the second Campbell Beach (*Johnston* 1946). *Clovis* points are 11,500 years old in the American Southwest, and they occur throughout the southern half of Saskatchewan. They have been found on lands fringing Lake Agassiz near Kamsack (*at Arran*), Saskatoon (*at Borden*) and Melfort (*at Pathlow*), indicating that if Clovis people came from Alaska along the trans-Canadian Mackenzie corridor between the Cordilleran and Laurentian ice caps during the Two Creek Interval (*Haynes* 1966), which is 1,500 years before the Agassiz climax, then Clovis people had to pass through Saskatchewan over 11,500 years ago.

Other fluted *Folsom-like* points have been found on sites within 25 miles of the outer margins of Lake Agassiz; one at Melfort, two at Porcupine Plain, and one at Arran. The distribution suggests that the people who used this point style may have inhabited the region just as the Agassiz Channel was forming 10,000 years ago. Yet the most characteristic style during this period was represented by lanceolate points, particularly the *Agate Basin* type (*Elson* 1957, *Pettipas* 1969) which has been found in abundance on the 10,000 year old Campbell Beach in Saskatchewan and Manitoba as well as in extinct shorelines of glacial lakes in the Upper Great Lakes region, where they have been classified as part of the *Aqua-Plano Culture* of 9,000 to 6,500 years ago (*Quimby* 1965). Essentially the *same* point styles occur to the west in the Plains, where they are grouped in the *Plano Culture* of 9,500 to 7,000 years ago (*Spencer, Jennings et al* 1965). The Plano Culture was adapted toward bison hunting in a grassland environment that was probably being parched in the south-western plains after the onset of deglaciation, although the grasslands in the northeastern plains were probably wet and lush as a result of their proximity to the remnants of glacial lakes. The Aqua-Plano Culture was adapted to a wet deglaciating forest and lake environment where hunting mastodon, deer, elk and caribou as well as fishing were the dominant activities.

After Lake Agassiz had receded, mastodons could have survived in the region until 7,000 years ago (*Hester* 1960). The *Late Aqua-Plano Culture* and the *Late Plano Culture* also characterized this period, which probably heralded the end of the big game hunting, to be followed by so-called archaic cultures. Shouldered points like *Alberta, Eden, Scottsbluff, Milnesand, Plainview* and *Frederick* are most common during this period. In addition, the *Boreal Archaic Culture*, which lasted from 7,000 to 2,500 years ago in the Upper Great Lakes region of the United States, had to be earlier along Agassiz beaches in Canada (*Quimby* 1965) where it was probably established over 8,000 years ago. Adapted to forest living, this culture's tool kit consisted of ground woodworking tools as well as stemmed and notched spearpoints, distributed throughout a part of the continent dominated by Algonkian-speaking groups in historic times (*Bloomfield* 1946, *Powell* 1891). The tools may represent the foremost intrusion of Proto-Algonkian groups into the heart of North America from the boreal zones of Asia and Europe where comparable items occur (*McKern* 1937), *Quimby* 1965). There is a slim possibility that other people, assigned to the *Little Arm Complex* that is 7,300 years old in the Yukon (*MacNeish* 1963), may have spilled into Saskatchewan 6,000 years ago, but this is evidenced so far only by a small triangular point type with an assymetrical tang. There may be some evidence for the *Northern Microblade Tradition* (*Irving* 1965) in the forested plains of central Saskatchewan, bordering the Precambrian Shield (*Brown* 1961), but it is not yet conclusive.

Hot summers and dry winters, which had initiated deglaciation, came on with a vengeance between 7,000 and 5,000 years ago, when droughts desiccated the American Southwest during the Altithermal Period (*Antevs* 1955). Glacial meltwater was almost gone, leaving the land vulnerable to the ravages of climate and fires lit by hunters. An advancing wave of grassland burned through the forests of Ohio into New York (*Mayer-Oakes* 1960). This tempted herds of bison from the scorched wasteland of the southwestern plains to the damper shores of a drained Lake Agassiz. Thus, hunters from the far west became foragers, mingling with fishermen along the northeastern fringes of the plains area, and jostling neighbors with the sound of another language. Based on known linguistic areas in historic times (*Hoijer* 1946), and assuming considerable continuity, they could have spoken an early form of Hokan-Siouan or Uto-Aztecan.

An *Alberta* point near Arborfield indicates the presence of hunters from the far west in the lake bottom of Lake Agassiz, after it had drained 8,000 years ago during the Gimli Phase. Alberta points are distributed along the Carrot River drainage basin, and elsewhere in the province (*Phenix* 1965). *Scottsbluff* points occur along the Agassiz beaches near Yorkton (*Palmer* 1968) and in Manitoba (*Hlady* 1967, 1969, *Steinbring* 1966, *Pettipas* 1967) near Arden, Carberry, Melita, Boissevain, and Virden, as well as in the Swan River Area. *Milnesand* points, which are 8,000 years old in Wyoming, and which may have more than a fleeting resemblance to some *Plainview* points in Saskatchewan (*Hlady* 1948, 1960) occur in the Agassiz region near Bjorkdale (*Campell & Meyer* 1968) where they may be 6,500 years old as they are in New Mexico. *Frederick* points, which may be Wyoming versions of the *Angostura* type in the Dakotas, mark the end of the big game hunting period in Wyoming about 6,500 years ago. These occur in the lake bottom of Lake Agassiz near Carrot River (*Meyer & Dyck* 1968), as do *Oxbow* points, which are 5,000 years old in southwestern Saskatchewan (*Nero & McCorquodale* 1958, *Wettlaufer & Mayer-Oakes* 1960), and represent an emergent forager tradition.

At a 4,100 year old Oxbow site near Moon Lake in central Saskatchewan (*Dyck* 1968, *McCallum n.d.*), a self-sufficient group is indicated, consisting of about nine campers huddled within a small triangular work area, with space allotted for each chore, and at whose apex a tiny fire was tended behind a windbreak upwind from the lakelet where they had hunted. A toolmaker sat before the fire, facing workers who fanned out along the edges of the smoke, and flicked razor-sharp flakes tidily into the embers. Meat was boiled in bags of water heated by fire-cracked rocks dropped inside; fat was pried from bison brains; skins were softened with thumbnail scrapers, and sewn with bone awls. They were among the first to quarry quartzite and chert from the beds of rivers that intersected the Campbell, Lower Campbell and McCauleyville shorelines of Lake Agassiz in Saskatchewan. The lithic nodules had been exposed by downcutting and degrading over a long period of time that was warmer than at present.

Exploitation of the raw lithic materials in this region continued without major interruption from about 5,000 to 2,000 years ago, reaching an industrial climax between 4,000 and 3,000 years ago (if point typologies are valid time horizon markers in this region), when people using *McKean*, *Duncan* and *Hanna* types of arrowheads moved into the province, probably from the southwest (*Watson* 1966). Like the Oxbow type, all of these points had indented bases, suggesting a similar hafting method, and radically different from the *Pelican Lake* type of point (*Wettlaufer* 1955) whose corner-notched base may be reminiscent of those in some of the large spearpoints (*Algonkian style*) of an earlier period (*Boreal Archaic*). However, the Pelican Lake style may have developed at a northwestern plains setting, where their markers may have been until they moved into the Agassiz region, perhaps forced eastward by Athapaskans who were moving into Alberta from the Northwest territories.

About 2,000 years ago, these Athapaskans turned eastward into Saskatchewan, using a *Besant* type of arrowpoint which may have been used in the North-West Territories from 5,000 to 2,000 years ago (*Reeves* 1966). In southern Manitoba, their counterpart, between 3,500 and 1,500 years ago, may have been the *Anderson* corner-notched point (*Forbis* 1960). These "northerners" need not have changed their way of life when they moved into the parkland of Saskatchewan, and they arrived at a critical time, when apostles of a mound-building religion, called *Hopewell*, were apparently infiltrating central Saskatchewan from the opposite direction. The Hopewellian influence had originated about 2,500 years ago in the central Mississippi, Ohio and Illinois River valleys, and migrated northward into the deciduous forest zone of the Upper Great Lakes region 2,100 years ago (*Quimby* 1965). A mound remains unexplored in southwestern Manitoba, but their corner-notched points have been found near the flint quarries where the high priests from the southeast may have met head-on with the men from the northwest, who prevailed, clinging to the Canadian Plains for another millenium, and surviving the intrusion of *Early Woodland* cultures, which are 2,500 to 2,100 years old in the east.

Ceramics of the *Laurel Tradition* (*Middle Woodland Culture*) have been found in the more northerly forested areas of Saskatchewan mainly in the Precambrian Shield, and perhaps in the area around Pelican Lake (*Brown* 1961, *Hlady, n.d.*, *Wright* 1967). This is significant insofar as it indicates that Saskatchewan may have been along the route over which the more northerly idea of pottermaking traversed from Siberia to the Great Lakes area. Further south, the *Avonlea* point (*Kehoe & McCorquodale* 1961) is 1,500 years old in southern Saskatchewan, and is reminiscent of an earlier forager tradition, adapted to bison kills as massive as any on the High Plains. The *Prairie Side-Notched* type may have been associated with Athapaskans who had used the Besant type, contrary to another view (*Kehoe* 1966) which would make them Algonkians. The *Selkirk Side-Notched* type is probably a Manitoba variant of this system, as are a number of other varieties (*Swift Current Fishtail, Irvine, Shaunavon Truncated Base, Lewis, Tompkins Side/Corner Notched, High River, Nanton Wide Rounded Base*), which simply reflect a strong Athapaskan trait—individualism—adapted to different regions. This point style was replaced by the *Plains Side-Notched* point when the Mississippian influence reached the Canadian plains about 600 years ago. Meanwhile, points and ceramics in the Agassiz region resemble those of the *Late Woodland Culture* which is 1,100 to 300 years old in the east. *Eastern Triangular* points are almost as abundant in the Agassiz regions of Saskatchewan and Manitoba as the side-notched points are throughout the Canadian plains during this protohistoric period.

When 21 year old Henry Kelsey in 1691 became the first European to see the Canadian plains, he was led like a tourist by friendly guides. The prairies had already been criss-crossed by the trails of many migrants, quickened when they got the horse around 1750 (*Ewers* 1955), and complicated in historic times by a leap-frog race for riches led by the fur-traders, who opened Fort à la Corne in 1753 along the Saskatchewan River, and went on to build over a hundred forts or posts throughout central Saskatchewan during the next century, sponsored by many independent firms as well as by the larger Hudson's Bay, Northwest and XY companies. Explorations of central Saskatchewan were conducted by such fur traders as Kelsey (1690-91), La Verendrye (1741), Henday (1754-55), Pond (1775-78), Turnor (1779, 1791-92), Fidler (1796, 1799, 1800) and Thompson (1786-88, 1796, 1797, 1802). Scientific explorations were conducted by such easterners as Franklin and Richardson (1819-22, 1825-27), Palliser (1857-58), Hind (1958), Dawson (1872-76), Macoun (1879, 1800) and Tyrell (1892, 1893, 1894). The North-West Mounted Police was formed shortly after western Canada became part of the newly confederated Dominion of Canada, when the Hudson's Bay Company relinquished its charter in 1870, after 200 years of governorship. By then, the Indians of the Canadian plains had already been reduced to a state where they were willing to negotiate or adhere to a number of treaties.

In retrospect, it can be seen that it was neither scalping, nor rotgut whiskey, nor prostitution that ruined the Indians of the Canadian plains; it was the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the wholesale slaughter of bison in the early 1870's, and a European's disease, smallpox, which had been spread by infected supplies poled up the Missouri River by Americans (*Andrist* 1964). The scourge spread northward along the Canadian plains to the very mouth of the Mackenzie River during the early part of the 19th Century. Some groups barely survived. In places the Canadian plains reeked with the smell of death of man and beast during those pestilent years. Looking back even farther on trails already blurred by time, it may be more refreshing to visualize the earliest men on the Canadian plains alive, pitted against collosal changes wrought by nature over the past 34,000 years, and perhaps even longer. Although much remains hidden, it may be reward enough to breathe the life that can come from such a view of man adapting to the challenge of a vast New World with inner resources that stood up to the test of his times.

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4

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE FUR TRADE ERA

L. G. THOMAS

Although there is today a respectable body of historical writing on the Canadian West, there exists, as far as I am aware, nothing in print that attempts to examine that body as a whole, no attempt to examine the directions it has taken or the historical philosophies of those who have contributed to it. Though there is a general recognition among students in the field of the importance of particular contributions, for example Arthur Silver Morton's monumental work, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, no one has tried to do for western Canadian history what Professor J. M. S. Careless has done for Canadian history in the largest sense in his seminal article "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History." What follows is not intended to fill that gap, but rather to indicate the nature and extent of it, and to suggest perhaps, that the gap ought to be filled.

It seems best for the purposes of this paper, to limit discussion largely to the historiography of the prairie West, or perhaps more precisely to that of the region lying west of Hudson Bay and east of the Rockies. Northern and southern boundaries are more difficult to delineate. The 49th parallel meant little prior to 1870, even though it was an officially recognized international boundary, and Indian, explorer, fur trader and missionary alike recognized no formal geographer's distinction between the plain and the shield. The exclusion of the mountain and Pacific West from this survey may well seem arbitrary: it can be justified only on grounds of space and time.

Where does the historiography of the Canadian West begin? This fundamental question has no easy answer. Are we to consider as historical works books like Alexander Henry the elder's (1739-1824) *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*, which appeared in 1809, or Sir Alexander MacKenzie's *Voyages* of 1801, or John West's *Journal* of 1824? Of course we must recognize their importance; without such sources we would have no historiography. It is, however, as sources that they will be regarded for present purposes, but no one should think for a moment that this in any way discounts their value.

Works such as these were published to satisfy an immense curiosity

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in the civilized English speaking world about what was virtually an unknown country, a great question mark on maps of North America. Nowhere was that curiosity more intense than in the United Kingdom. This was fully appreciated by the Hudson's Bay Company and over the years the company, in spite of a natural reticence about revealing too many of the secrets of the fur trade, showed its understanding of the importance for its relations with the public of feeding this curiosity with information. Mackenzie's *Voyages* were an important ploy in his determination to leave the West for the more eligible life of the Scottish laird. West's *Journal* found easy publication and eager readers among the missionary minded public of a country profoundly influenced by the Evangelical revival. These may be regarded as works of propaganda rather than as history and the same may be said of much, perhaps most, of the early writing on the Canadian West. They are indispensable to the historian but they are bibliographical rather than historiographical items, more important for the use that later historians made of them than for the place their writers have in a discussion of the approach of the historian to the history of the West. This distinction may also be an arbitrary one, defensible only on the grounds of utility.

A brief consideration of three writers may help to illustrate the problem involved in crossing this dimly defined borderline, the point at which the writer turns from recording his own experience, reinforced by the recollections of others, and begins consciously to collate and interpret the evidence available, whether it be published works, manuscript material, or information gleaned from personal observation and conservation. The three authors are Donald Gunn, Alexander Begg the younger, and George Bryce. All three wrote on the history of the prairie West and all three were deeply involved in its development, Gunn (1797-1878) as a fur trader and leading citizen of the Red River colony, Begg (1839-1897) as a merchant, newspaper man and civil servant whose career spans both Riel risings, and Bryce (1844-1931) as a Presbyterian minister and prominent educator in his adopted province of Manitoba.

It may well be objected that such a selection slights the claims of Alexander Ross (1783-1856) to be regarded as the Herodotus of the Canadian West. His writings, all published a quarter of a century or more before the earliest of these, remain an indispensable source for the student of western Canada as they were for Gunn, Begg and Bryce. He settled in the Red River colony in 1825, not long after Donald Gun, and as sheriff and a member of the Council of Assiniboia played an active part in the colony's life until his death in 1856, the year in which his Red River Settlement was published. His lively picture of Red River life is a classic of Canadian literature; one could wish that all western history was as closely observed and as well written. His work was, however, almost entirely based on his own recollections and for that reason I have not placed him in the same category as Gunn, Begg and Bryce.

Like Ross, Donald Gunn was actively and prominently identified with the life of the settlement from the time he left the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1823, a willing casualty of the coalition with the North West Company. He farmed in St. Andrew's parish, "Little Britain," and after ten years took charge of the Church Missionary Society's school in that parish. Later he was "custodian and librarian in his own house of the only public collection of books in the country."[1] Although Gunn was a leader in the agitation to secure a voice for the settlers in the management of the settlement and thus not acceptable to the Hudson's Bay Company as a member of the Council of Assiniboia, he was, according to his eulogist, "from a very early day joined in the magistracy"[2] and held public office in the newly formed province, notably as a member of the short-lived Legislative Council of Manitoba from 1871 until its demise in 1876. Deeply interested in natural history, as early as 1850 he became a meteorological observer for the Smithsonian Institute of which he remained a valued correspondent and contributing member.[3]

Gunn saw the function of the historian as primarily the provision for his reader of all the evidence available, though he was by no means blind to the historian's duty of critical evaluation. "Thus we have been minute in laying before the reader all the information that we have been able to collect, that threw any light on the feuds of those unhappy times. And we have been fortunate in being able to appeal, for our information, to the testimony of living witnesses, and not reduced to the necessity of depending for our knowledge of past events on the special pleading of others."[4]

Gunn did not flinch from the problem of interpretation. He was sympathetic to the colonists but highly critical of Selkirk, seeing him as interested not in colonization but in the promotion of the Hudson's Bay Company's control of trade. His point of view was very much that of the settler irked by the colonial establishment. When the Reverend David Jones, Church of England missionary and chaplain to the Company, made a comparison between the Kildonan Scots on the one hand and the Orkneymen and half-breeds on the other, a comparison highly unflattering to the former, Gunn is quick in the defence of his compatriots: "the Reverend gentleman found the task of dictating to Orkney Islanders, as he calls them, and to half-breeds too, much easier than to make stubborn Scotsmen renounce their creed."[5]

With Alexander Begg (1839-1897) and his *History of the North-West*, whose three volumes were published in Toronto in 1894 and 1895, we are on rather different ground. Gunn had lived in the North-West from the beginning of the Selkirk settlement; Begg was a comparative newcomer. He had in 1871 published his account of the Red River troubles, based on the diary which itself has recently been published.[6] His later history was conceived on a broader scale, and only the first volume is concerned with the period to 1870. Although Begg treats the Hudson's Bay Company respectfully—the work is dedicated to Lord Strathcona—he does not make a hero of Selkirk, though he wastes no sympathy on the North West Company. Begg's conception of history was a broad one; he deals with missions, exploration, the social and economic development of the settlement, as well as with the fur trade and the role of the Company. Though Begg often makes generous quotations from his sources, they by no means dominate his narrative and his account of the North-West, though less personal than the writing of Gunn and Ross, was certainly a serious and successful essay that lies at the basis of much later writing on the region.

With the works of George Bryce (1844-1931) we move into the field of academic history. Bryce was born in Upper Canada, of Scottish parentage, educated at Toronto and ordained to the Presbyterian ministry in 1871. He went to Manitoba where he was at once deeply involved in educational and ecclesiastical administration. He was the founder of Manitoba College and one of the founders of the University of Manitoba; he was extremely active in the extension of the Presbyterian work in the West and in 1902 was elected Moderator of the Presbyterian Church. In the midst of an inordinately busy life he was a prolific writer; Peel's bibliography lists no less than 34 items on the West alone yet the study and writing of history was by no means Bryce's primary interest. One of his critics has observed: "Although his source material was frequently scanty, and oftimes many of his facts inaccurate, he seems to have written too rapidly and voluminously to have given much attention to style. . . . He always regarded history as closely related to science, but he did not very successfully apply this method of approach to his own writing. There is some faulty perspective in his earlier work, due perhaps to his very closeness to the scene of which he writes."[7]

Like Gunn and Begg, Bryce was not primarily an historian; he had too many preoccupations. The western society in which he lived was in a phase of very rapid development, a development in which Bryce was deeply involved. It was a society curious about its past and not without concern for the preservation of its history. Among Bryce's many activities was the Manitoba Historical Literary and Scientific Society, of which he was an incorporator at its foundation in 1879 and which for the next five years he served as corresponding secretary. Alexander Begg was also one of the organizers of the Society.[8] By 1904 it had a substantial library of some 6000 volumes, it had played an important part in the establishment of Winnipeg's civic library and it had published 63 papers as its *Transactions*.[9] The papers read to the Society, many by Bryce himself, suggest a lively interest in the history of the West. One of the earliest papers, read by William Dennis, "a young journalist . . . formerly of Halifax," dealt with the sources of North-Western history. Dennis had "waited upon prominent members of the Historical Society" and had placed before the Society the result of his investigations. Though no doubt depending heavily upon the ubiquitous Bryce, the paper is impressive as an early example of interest in the historiography of the West.[10]

Writers like Gunn, Begg and Bryce depended heavily upon their own observations on the North-West and their unique opportunity to consult local witnesses and to draw upon local tradition. They were however handicapped by the limited body of documents and the restricted library facilities available, in spite of the heroic efforts of bodies like the Historic and Scientific Society of Manitoba. To collect and make available documents and rare publications on a scale adequate to the needs of the historian was a task beyond provincial or regional resources of the time. The development of the Public Archives of Canada is therefore a factor of primary importance in the historiography of the North-West. Although established as early as 1872, the Archives Branch languished in spite of the efforts of the first Dominion Archivist, Douglas Brymner. With the merging of the Records and Archives branches and the appointment as archivist of Arthur G. Doughty in 1904 and the provision of an archives building in 1906, the pace of development of the public archives, in keeping with the pace of development of Canada itself, was much accelerated and in 1912 the archives was at last detached from the Department of Agriculture and the Dominion Archivist given the status of deputy minister.

Another important influence on the development of the historiography of the West was the founding of the Champlain Society in 1905. The purpose of the Society was "to undertake the publication of rare books or unpublished materials relating to Canada that the ordinary commercial publisher would not accept."[11] With the exception of J. B. Tyrrell's edition of Samuel Hearne's *Journey from Prince of Wales Fort . . . to the Northern Ocean*, 1769-1772,[12] the earlier publications of the Society dealt with Eastern Canada but the great success of Tyrrell's *Narrative of David Thompson*, issued in 1915, led the Society to turn its attention to the West.[13] There followed L. J. Burpee's edition of the *Journals and Letters of La Verendrye and his Sons*, though this did not appear until 1927.[14] Then there appeared in fairly quick succession such monuments of scholarship as J. B. Tyrrell, *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay*[15] and his *Journals of Samuel Hearne and Philip Turnor Between the years* 1774-1796,[16] W. S. Wallace's edition of John McLean's *Notes of a Twenty-five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territories*,[17] and his *Documents Relating to the Northwest Company*[18] and G. P. de T. Glazebrook's *Hargrave Correspondence*, 1821-43.[19]

Students of Canadian history were well aware of the rich storehouse of materials in the possession of the Hudson's Bay Company. Indeed

W. S. Dennis in his pioneer essay on the sources of North-Western history, referred to the Company's London library as "the best collection of works on the Northwest."[20] As early as 1913 W. S. Wallace, using the good offices of Sir Edmund Walker, approached the Company but was politely rebuffed by Lord Strathcona.[21] The Company's archives prior to 1924 were stored in packing cases in the vaults of its London warehouses.[22] According to R. H. G. Leveson-Gower, long the archivist of the Company, when Sir William Schooling was preparing his brochure of 1920 on the history of the Company "it was realized that there was latent . . . a vast accumulation of material . . . steps were taken to prepare a catalogue . . . a great advance on the incomplete manuscript lists. . . . It was also decided to house the archives in some form that would facilitate reference". The archives travelled from Lime Street to Garlick Hill in 1924 and thence in 1927 to the new Hudson's Bay House in Bishopsgate. In the new quarters materials received from the Canadian posts could be more easily and rapidly opened and arranged. "In the spring of 1928 the Board decided to publish some of the more interesting journals and other documents relative to the period of Sir George Simpson." The onset of the depression forced the Company to suspend its program of publication,[23] but when in 1931 Patrick Ashley Cooper was appointed Governor and the Board reconstituted, "the archives were given special consideration."[24] The Company and the Champlain Society were by this time working in close cooperation and in 1936 came to an agreement "whereby the Society undertook to bring out for the Company a Hudson's Bay series of volumes."[25] The first in the series was E. E. Rich's edition of *Simpson's Athabasca Journal*, which appeared in 1938. In due course this fruitful collaboration merged into the separate publication program of the Hudson's Bay Record Society,[26] when in 1949 the two societies came to an amicable parting.[27]

The close relationship between the Champlain Society and the Hudson's Bay Company owed much to one of the most remarkable figures in the historiography of the Canadian West, Joseph Burr Tyrrell, the geologist and mining engineer whose distinguished career spanned almost a century of Canadian history from 1858 to 1957. Born in Ontario and educated at Upper Canada College and the University of Toronto, Tyrrell joined the Canadian Geological Survey under A. R. C. Selwyn in 1881. He accompanied George Mercer Dawson in his exploration of the Rockies in 1883, discovered the dinosaur remains of the Red Deer Valley, explored the country north of Calgary between the Bow and the Saskatchewan and much of northwestern Manitoba and the region northwest of Lake Athabasca, twice crossed the Barren Lands and confirmed the first discovery of oil in Alberta. In 1898 he went to Dawson City to practice as a mining engineer. From 1925 to 1954 he was President of the Kirkland Lake Gold Mining Company. His works on Hearne, David Thompson and the early history of Hudson Bay have already been mentioned as major contributions to the early history of the West. Not only was Tyrrell the editor of some of the Champlain Society's most successful volumes but he was also the Society's President from 1927 to 1932.

With the name of Tyrrell must be linked that of Lawrence J. Burpee (1873-1946), an equally memorable Canadian of the first half of the twentieth century. Halifax born of Loyalist descent, Burpee entered the Civil Service in 1890 and in 1912, at the inception of the International Joint Commission, became its Canadian Secretary. His fame among students of the history of the Canadian West rests chiefly on his *Search for the Western Sea*[28] and his publication of the journals of Anthony Henday, Mathew Cocking, François Antoine Larocque and, above all, of Verendrye.[29] Burpee was an amazingly prolific writer. It is hard to imagine today such a senior civil servant finding leisure for such an impressive and varied production and for such a deep involvement in so many good causes, including the Anglican church, the Boy Scouts, and the Institute of International Affairs, while still being able to afford time for golf and curling. It should also be mentioned that he was one of those most largely responsible for the founding of the Canadian Historical Association in 1922.

The extraordinary activities of Canadians like Tyrrell and Burpee in laying the foundations for the study of the history of the Canadian West were supplemented by the work of some equally dedicated American scholars, notably Elliot Coues (1842-1899), Gideon Delaplaine Scull (1824-1889), and Reuben Gold Thwaites (1853-1913). Of these Coues, like Tyrrell and Burpee, was not a professional historian. A medical officer in the United States army and a brilliant ornithologist, he made major contributions to biological studies. In the 1880's he became an ardent theosophist but quarrelled with his fellow enthusiasts and was expelled from their society. He then turned to editing works on early travel; among the fifteen volumes he published the most important for the Canadian West are those entitled *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest, The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson*, 1799-1814, which appeared in New York in 1887. Scull edited for the Prince Society of Boston their publication of 1885 entitled *Voyages of Peter Esprit Radisson, being an account of His Travels and Experiences Among the North American Indians, from* 1652-1684.[30] Reuben Gold Thwaites (1853-1913) was for many years Secretary of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, for whose famous collection of historical material he was largely responsible. Students of western history may be interested to learn that, according to the Dictionary of American Biography, he "arranged seminar rooms for the use of Frederick Jackson Turner, where Turner gathered advanced students for research in the history of the West, now made available in these manuscript sources." To students of Canadian history Thwaites is chiefly remembered as the collector and translator of the 73 volumes that appeared between 1896 and 1901, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents.*

By 1914 a solid foundation had been laid for the study of the history of the Canadian West. The quickening of the pace of Canadian development in the early years of the twentieth century, an acceleration which was to a great extent the result of the flood of settlement into the prairie West, brought a livelier interest in Canadian history and, comprehensibly, in the history of the region that promised so much for the Canadian future. Prosperity and curiosity combined to produce on a cooperative basis three major surveys of the Canadian past, *The Makers of Canada,* 12 v., 1904, *Canada and its Provinces,* 23 v., 1913-14, Index, 1917, and *The Chronicles of Canada,* 32 v., 1914-16. These all gave notice to the history of the prairie West; familiar names like Bryce, Burpee, Tyrrell and Agnes Laut appear among the contributors while Adam Short and A. G. Doughty acted as general editors of *Canada and its Provinces.*

Among those who contributed articles or books to these mammoth collaborations was Chester Bailey Martin, 1882-1958, a scholar who has a special place in the historiography of the Canadian West. Prior to Martin's appearance the major contributions to western Canadian history were made by those who were not professional historians. By that rather awkward phrase I mean those who earn their living primarily by the study, teaching and writing of history. I do not, of course, imply that the contributions made by non-professionals are in any sense less important. Martin's acceptance in 1909 of a position at the University of Manitoba does however mark a turning point of some significance in the historiography of the Canadian West. Nova Scotia born, a graduate of the University of New Brunswick and the first Rhodes Scholar in North America, Martin read history at Oxford under A. L. Smith, the famous tutor who so strongly influenced his generation of Balliol men. Between Oxford and Winnipeg he worked in the Public Archives under Doughty. *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada* appeared in 1916.[31] It was the first really scholarly treatment of an important and controversial figure in the history of the West and while firmly based on primary sources, it sympathetically and judiciously interpreted the role of the man with whom the beginning of settlement will always be associated.

Martin's work also illustrated another trend of some importance in western historiography. Earlier writers had dealt with western subjects as incidental to or as extensions of an interest in Canadian history in general. Martin used his studies in regional history as the basis for a consideration of national history in its broadest terms. I cannot do better than quote the words of Professor Creighton. While still at Manitoba "he was pushing the main interests of his research backward in time, and eastward in space, towards the beginnings of British North American history."[32] Though Martin continued his interest in the West, for example in his *Dominion Lands Policy* and his editing of Simpson's Athabasca Journal for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, both published in 1938, his wider interests are reflected in his *Empire and Commonwealth*, 1929, and his *Foundations of Canadian Nationhood*, 1955.

Professor Creighton calls Martin "one of the most distinguished members of the second generation of professional Canadian historians," a group in which he includes MacArthur, Trotter, and Harold Innis, scholars he regards as comparable in their generation with Wrong, Short, Doughty and Colby in theirs.[33] No discussion of western historiography could omit mention of Harold Adams Innis, 1894-1953, perhaps the most profoundly influential intellect that Canada has produced in the field not only of economic history but of the social sciences at large. His *Fur Trade In Canada*, first published in 1930, his *Peter Pond*, which appeared in the same year, and his introduction to the Champlain Society's *Minutes of the Council, Northern Department of Rupert's Land*, 1821-31, 1940, were works of deep scholarship and high originality, which illuminated the history of the West and pointed to new directions in Canadian scholarship which even today have not been finally explored.

Of the same generation of Canadian historians but with a very different concept of the uses of history was that giant of western historiography, Arthur Silver Morton, 1870-1945. His monumental *History of the Canadian West to 1870-71* published in 1939, remains the indispensable companion of every student in the field. Born in Trinidad, the son of a Presbyterian missionary from Nova Scotia, Morton studied at Edinburgh and on the continent. Ordained to the ministry, he found his vocation in scholarship. In 1914, perhaps a little out of sympathy with the more conservative theologically of his Presbyterian brethren, Morton came to the youthful University of Saskatchewan, whose founding president Walter Murray had been an Edinburgh friend and where Edmund Henry Oliver (1882-1935) had done pioneer work in his *Canadian North-West: Its Early Development and Legislative Records*, (2 vols., Ottawa, 1914.) There Morton remained as Professor of History until 1940. From 1937 until his death in 1945 he was the Keeper of Provincial Records of Saskatchewan. Trained in medieval and church history as he was, the outbreak of war cut Morton off from his European sources. With a keen sense of the importance to the new province of its historical background he began the process of immersion in its sources that was to lead to the publication, nearly quarter of a century later, of his major work. Deeply interested in historical geography, he spent much time in what was in effect archaeological investigation of the fur trade posts of Saskatchewan and his manuscript "Historical Geography" remains in Saskatoon, a valuable if surprisingly little used source of information on historical topography. He enriched the university's collection of historical materials and at the same time took advantage of the pioneer work of other collectors of source material. He was a familiar figure in the archives at Victoria, Winnipeg, and particularly Ottawa, where the Public Archives had by the 1920's become the major centre for research in Canadian history. He was also the first student of the history of the Canadian West to make full use of the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company.

No one is likely to minimize the importance of A. S. Morton's contribution to the history of the Canadian West. Not only did his exact and demanding scholarship add enormously to the available body of information but his powers of organization also enabled him to hack a trail through the tangled undergrowth of detail that many have been grateful to follow. He imposed upon the history of the West a chronology that was badly needed. Beyond these great services Morton had insights into the history of the West whose implications have not yet been fully worked out.

Giant that he is, Morton stands outside the main stream of Canadian history in his time. He never seems to have felt the impulse to use his study of the West as a basis for an analysis of the larger history of Canada, as Chester Martin did, or as W. L. Morton is doing in our own time. Indeed Canadian history in this sense does not seem greatly to have interested him. Perhaps it is worth remarking that he never taught a general course in Canadian history. He belonged to a generation that was much concerned with the search for Canadian identity but he was anything but a Canadian nationalist. He saw himself rather as a citizen of the British empire by birth and a westerner by choice.

In his justly celebrated article, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History,"[34] Professor Careless identifies A. S. Morton with the environmentalist school of Canadian history, which he relates to, although by no means identifies with, the frontier school of American history whose adherents followed so breathlessly in the footsteps of Frederick Jackson Turner. Though as devoted an historical geographer as Morton could scarcely be expected not to give great weight to environmental factors, readers of the *History of the Canadian West* may well wonder whether he had ever read that famous essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." He was in some of his attitudes very close to what Careless calls the Britannic or "Blood is Thicker than Water" school. He was also conscious of the influence on the West of the metropolis, though clearly for him the proper metropolis was London, not Montreal and certainly not Toronto. Morton had, however, little interest in theories of history. Like H. A. L. Fisher he discerned in history no plot, no rhythm, no predetermined pattern.

Perhaps because no school could claim him as an adherent, Morton, fundamental though his work was, founded no school of historians. He developed in his students, whether his pupils or his readers, an immense respect for historical fact and for the task of the historian but he propounded no gospel of historical interpretation upon which his disciples could erect a body of dogma. He did not do for the history of the Canadian West what Turner did for the history of the American West. In this, perhaps, he rendered no great disservice.

Morton's *History* has sometimes been called definitive. It is scarcely that. He would indeed have been the last to have thought it so. It remains instead the firm foundation on which work on the period before 1870 can proceed, introducing elements of breadth and depth that enrich our knowledge not only of the western past but of that of Canada as a whole and even beyond that to the past of all mankind. The work of Professor Rich, ably assisted by Miss Alice M. Johnson, has brought the history of the Hudson's Bay Company more firmly into its context of British expansion. G. F. G. Stanley's *Birth of Western Canada* and his brilliant biography of Louis Riel provide an effective transition from the period of fur trade to the period of settlement. Marcel Giraud's *Le métis Canadien* (Paris, 1945) relates the rise of a new people to the history of French expansion in North America. Above all W. L. Morton's studies of the Red River colony give new depth to our understanding of the history of the settlement and lead the students of the history of the West into new conceptions of the relationship between regional and national history.

There is still much to be done in the field and no student need lack for useful employment. We need more study of the history of individual posts of the trade, studies for which abundant materials exist. In spite of the pioneer work of scholars like Father A. G. Morice and Dr. T. C. B. Boon we know relatively little of the history of missions. The day to day life of the fur trader has not been adequately described. There is room for further study of Sir George Simpson, though one would need the scholarly fortitude of a Morton not to recoil from those reels and reels of microfilm that represent what must be one of the most massive private correspondences anywhere preserved. There is no study of the English speaking "country-born" comparable to Giraud's study of the *métis*. We know pitifully little of the Indian, though here we must look to the archaeologist and the anthropologist for assistance. This is to mention only some of the possibilities for further research and writing, much in the same way that this discussion of what has been done has touched on only a few of the outstanding workers who have toiled in our exceedingly well documented vineyard.

One of the striking things about the historiography of the prairie West is the contribution that has been made to it by scholars whose primary fields of interest lie elsewhere. Indeed among all those whose names I have mentioned only Arthur Silver Morton chose to dedicate himself wholly to western history, and his first published work. *The Way to Union* (Toronto, 1912) was in the field of church history. Even Morton was an historian of the West as much by accident as by choice. It should not be difficult for those who follow in his footsteps to accept what Fisher called the one safe rule for the historian, to "recognize in the development of human destinies the play of the contingent and the unforeseen." It should be equally easy for the student of the history of the Canadian West to recognize the essential unity of all history, thus setting regional history in its proper place, not as an end in itself but as a means to an understanding, or at least a partial appreciation, of the nature of history.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Donald Gunn, *History of Manitoba from the earliest settlement to 1835*, Ottawa, 1880, p. xv. A sketch of Gunn's career by F. L. H. (whom I take to be Frank Larned Hunt) appears in the volume.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. xix.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 156.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 264

[6] W. L. Morton, ed., *Alexander Begg's Red River Journal and other papers relative to the Red River resistance of 1869-1870, Toronto*: The Champlain Society, 1956.

[7] *A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Canadian Who was Who,* edited by Sir Charles G. D. Roberts and Arthur L. Tunnell, Toronto, 1938, Vol. II, p. 52, "George Bryce," by E. W. M. (Edith Wilson Mills). This is the best biographical account of Bryce I have found. Both Peel and Wallace, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography,* refer to the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* for 1932, the year after Bryce died, but I can find no eulogy.

[8] W. L. Morton, ed., *Begg's Red River Journal*, p. xvii.

[9] *Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba. Transaction No. 64, February 9th, 1904*, "Treasures of our Library," by George Bryce, Winnipeg, 1904, pp. 8, 12.

[10] *Manitoba Historical and Scientific Society, Winnipeg.* Transaction No. 6, "The Sources of North Western History," by William Dennis, Winnipeg, n.d. (Peel 1883).

[11] W Stewart Wallace, *A Sketch of the History of the Champlain Society,* Printed for the Society, Toronto, 1937, p. 3.

[12] No. 6 in the Society's Publications, Toronto, 1911.

[13] No. 12 in the Society's Publications. The title page is dated 1916 and the copyright was dated 1915, the date W. S. Wallace used in *op. cit.*, pp. 4-6.

[14] No. 16 in the Society's Publications, Toronto, 1927.

[15] No. 18 in the Society's Publications, Toronto, 1931.

[16] No. 21 in the Society's Publications, Toronto, 1934.

[17] No. 19 in the Society's Pulications, Toronto, 1931.

[18] No. 22 in the Society's Publications, Toronto, 1934.

[19] No. 24 in the Society's Publications, Toronto, 1938.

[20] Norris, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

[21] W. S. Wallace, *The Champlain Society,* p. 6.

[22] R. H. Leveson-Gower, "The Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company," *The Beaver,* December 1933, Outfit 264, No. 3, pp. 40 f. The references to the Hudson's Bay Company archives are based on this article.

[23] W. S. Wallace, *The Champlain Society,* p. 6.

[24] Leveson-Gower, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[25] W. S. Wallace, *The Champlain Society*, p. 7.

[26] See also *The Champlain Society, Twenty-ninth Annual Report January 1, 1935 to December 31, 1935,* Printed for the Society, Toronto, 1936, pp. 4 f. ". . . after negotiations extending over the past year or more, in which His Excellency the Governor General, on this side of the Atlantic, and Sir Campbell Stuart, on the other side, have taken a direct interest, the Council of the Champlain Society has been able to come to an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company whereby the Champlain Society is to have the exclusive right of publishing the wealth of original documentary material relating to the history of Canada contained

in the archives of Hudson's Bay House. It is proposed to issue one volume a year in a Hudson's Bay Company series, on each volume to be subject to the ultimate editorial approval of the Council of the Champlain Society and issued to members in their regular subscription. In return for the privilege of publishing the priceless records in Hudson's Bay House, the Council of the Champlain Society has agreed to furnish the Hudson's Bay Company with a specified number of copies of the volumes of the Hudson's Bay Company series, at cost, for distribution or sale, at a price not less than that paid by members of the Society; but the number of these copies will be distinctly limited, and they will be published in a somewhat different format. The Council of the Champlain Society feels that in placing at the disposal of the Hudson's Bay Company its facilities for publication, it is performing a service of great value and importance for students of Canadian history." Apparently the agreement was not quite so final as this would suggest, as the next *Annual Report* passes over the matter rather discreetly and the final arrangements are given in some detail in the *Thirty-First Annual Report, January 1, 1937 to December 31, 1937*, pp. 4-5.

[27] For details of the parting see the Champlain Society's *Annual Reports* for 1949 and 1952.

[28] Lawrence J. Burpee, *The Search for the Western Sea; the story of the exploration of northwestern America*, London, 1908; New and revised edition, Toronto, 1938.

[29] Lawrence J. Burpee, *York Factory to the Blackfoot Country; the journal of Anthony Henday, 1754-55*, Ottawa, 1907. *An adventurer from Hudson Bay; journal of Mathew Cocking; from York Factory to the Blackfoot Country*, 1772-73. Ottawa, 1908. *Journal of Larocque from the Assiniboia to the Yellowstone, 1805*, Ottawa, 1910. *Journals and letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de La Verendrye and his sons . . .*, Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1927.

[30] Grace Lee Nute argues convincingly that the manuscript in the Bodleian Library at Oxford is a translation paid for by the Hudson's Bay Company. See her *Caesars of the Wilderness*, p. 29, note 6, and elsewhere.

[31] Chester Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, Oxford, 1916 (Oxford Historical and Library Society, V. 7).

[32] D. G. Creighton's eulogy of Chester Martin, *Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada*, 3rd series, Vol. LII, Ottawa, 1958, p. 94.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 93. Professor Creighton does not include in his list any French Canadian historians.

[34] *The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1 (March, 1954), p. 6, note 6; p. 9, note 19.

5

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE CANADIAN PLAINS AFTER 1870

T. D. REGEHR

"Each age writes the history of the past anew with reference to the conditions uppermost in its own time."[1] This statement by Frederick Jackson Turner may not be an accurate description of all written history, but the history of the Canadian plains has often been written by historians concerned about conditions in their own time.

The history of the Canadian prairies has rightly been divided into several distinct periods. First there was the period of early exploration and the fur trade, followed by the years of settlement and the wheat boom. This in turn gave way to a period of drought, depression, and "consolidation," when severe new hardships afflicted prairie dwellers. There was, of course, a great deal of continuity from one period to the next, but 1870 and 1929 are generally seen as years of rapid transition.

All this is well known to the student of Canadian plains history. What may not be so widely recognized is the fact that historians of the plains have been very much influenced by the times in which they wrote. Western Canadian historians of the 1930's wrote very different history than did their predecessors. Highly optimistic accounts of western growth and development gave way before the withering winds of depression to pessimistic histories of over-development and pleas for consolidation and scientific social planning. These in turn gave way in the 1950's to a preoccupation with political eccentricity and prairie radicalism.

In this paper I will restrict my comments to historical writings about the post-1870 period of western Canada.[2] Canada's acquisition of Rupert's Land in 1870 marked the end of the fur trade era and the beginning of the settlement period. This beginning was exciting and troubled, and people living in or migrating to western Canada after 1870 were well aware of the historical significance of the events they witnessed. Thus we find Alexander Begg, who arrived at Red River in 1870 and later became an immigration officer for the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, meticulously writing his Red River journal.[3] He then published several histories of Manitoba and the North-West based on personal observations and available documentation.[4]

Begg set the style and tone for early western Canadian historical writing. He and his immediate successors stressed the progress, growth,

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development and future prospects of the West. The signs of growth and progress, usually measured by Ontario or British standards, were everywhere to be seen. Economically, politically, socially, educationally, and culturally the plains were being developed, settled and civilized. It was an honourable and romantic story of the struggle of man against nature, and historians told it with zest and enthusiasm. Begg's introduction to his *History of the North-West* is indicative of the tenor of his work. "The march of civilization in the North West then began (1869-70), and today, instead of being a vast hunting ground and wilderness, it is the home of thousands of thrifty settlers, and with its great transcontinental railway from ocean to ocean, placed Canada in the proud position of being one of the brightest jewels of the British crown."[5].

An immigration agent of the Canadian Pacific Railway might be expected to write in this manner, but he was not alone. George Bryce, the first Head of Manitoba College, titled the last two chapters of his *History of Manitoba*, "The Years of Progress" and "The Attractions of Manitoba."[6] Others repeated the chronicles of heroic men subduing and civilizing the western wilderness.[7]

The progress of civilization was not, of course, without its problems. There was the resistance of the native peoples, and the Manitoba quarrel about the nature of the new society in the West. Should it be a new French Canadian nation or a New Ontario? Historians had their disagreements, but the reality or the promise of progress and growth was loudly proclaimed by all. Several western institutions, notably the North-West Mounted Police and the Canadian Pacific Railway, particularly lent themselves to this theme and historians made much of the romance of these institutions.[8]

This optimistic and romantic style of western historiography probably reached its fullest expression in that collective academic enterprise entitled *Canada and Its Provinces: A History of the Canadian People and their Institutions by One Hundred Associates*. It is interesting and indicative of the mood of the times to count the number of times the authors of the two volumes on the Prairie Provinces used the words growth, progress, or development in their chapter and sub-title headings.[9] These volumes were published in 1914 when men still believed, or at any rate hoped, that the twentieth century belonged to Canada and particularly to western Canada. The decades before World War I were a golden age for the prairies and historians fully shared the optimism and sense of accomplishment of their day. This optimism did not die easily. In 1924 the Legislative Librarians of Alberta and Saskatchewan each produced multi-volume histories of their respective provinces, complete with biographical sketches.[10] John Blue, the author of the Alberta history, expressed not only his own creed but that of a generation of western historians when he wrote, "To trace the development of the political institutions of the newest province of the Dominion and compare it with the development of similar institutions in the older provinces of Canada, is an interesting study in comparative politics and highly illustrative of the manner in which responsible government grows in free communities. The wonderful development of the province since it was opened for settlement is a story of enthralling interest."[11] This was the story of civilization marching westward.

This style of writing was, however, being challenged in the 1920's. The magnitude of farm and labour problems in the post war years forced not only farmers but also historians to reconsider the basis of their earlier optimism. Several histories of the western farmers' protest movements were quickly written.[12] Their theme was that the optimism of the settlement boom had not been mistaken, but that eastern oriented national policies were depriving the western farmer of his just reward. Farmers must organize and co-operate to achieve their rightful place in the nation. In confirmation of this view Harold A. Innis, one of Canada's outstanding economic historians, wrote in his important and scholarly new *History of the Canadian Pacific Railway*: "The dominance of eastern over western Canada seems likely to persist. Western Canada has paid for the development of Canadian nationality, and it would appear that it must continue to pay. The acquisitiveness of eastern Canada shows little sign of abatement."[13]

Historians of western protest movements quickly saw the close similarity between Canadian and American developments of the agrarian frontier. This prompted Canadians, apparently for the first time, to seriously examine American frontier theories. The first such attempt was made by Professor Walter N. Sage who wrote in 1928, "For over thirty years Prof. Frederick Jackson Turner and his disciples have been pointing out the significance of the frontier in United States history, but they have only casually alluded to the development of the Canadian frontier. Nor have Canadian historians, as yet, given much attention to the obvious parallels which may be drawn between the history of the United States and that of Canada."[14]

Professor Sage believed in a North American continental frontier. "The Canadian frontier," he wrote, "has at times entered the United States because the natural 'way' to the west lay through United States territory. But the American frontier has also in several places moved north into Canada."[15] Sage saw the rise of agrarian political parties and the formation of co-operative societies in western Canada as the most marked influence of the American frontier in Canadian history.

After 1928 several articles were published in which the similarities and differences between Canadian and American frontier experiences were debated.[16] In summarizing these articles Professor Morris Zaslow wrote in 1948, "Canadian historians have tended to stress environment as a major factor in Canadian history, one in which the frontier influence is only a part; and they have not neglected, as did Turner, the importance of traditions and acquired ideas as factors in explaining historical events."[17] Historians of the Canadian plains have generally viewed their history in terms of culture, civilization, and parliamentary government moving to, not emanating from the frontier. Until the farm protest movements this was the dominant theme of Canadian plains historiography. Independent political action by the farmers, with its close American parallels, forced many to critically re-examine the settlement process. Environmental factors were thereafter given more weight, particularly in explaining differences between East and West, but the Turner thesis was not accepted in its entirety.

Before resolving the dispute about the frontier influence, the attention of western historians was forced into new channels by the economic disasters of the 1930's. Drought and depression had a tremendous influence on historians, and led them to completely rewrite the history of the settlement period. The initial stimulus for a serious new study of the settlement process came from the American Geographical Society. In 1931 that society sponsored a series of studies on the problems of pioneer settlement in various parts of the world. Underlying the action of the American Geographical Society was the fear that settlement had already or might in the future extend into marginal areas where success would be impossible without special technological skills and new government policies.

The first of the American Geographical Society studies was a book by Isaiah Bowman entitled *The Pioneer Fringe*.[18] In it the author tried to describe the nature and analyse the problems of settlement in marginal or fringe areas. He strongly urged the development of a science of settlement which would provide the means for both attracting men to, and assisting them on promising new lands, and withdrawing settlement from the least favourable areas. Accompanying this was a second volume consisting of twenty-six studies by various authors investigating pioneer settlement problems in various parts of the world.[19] Six of these twenty-six authors dealt with the problems of the Canadian prairies. The announced purpose of these studies was to investigate and, if possible, solve the complex problems of pioneer settlement, particularly in relation to changing technological, economic and climatic conditions. It was hoped that the groundwork might be laid for a new science of pioneer settlement.

When these studies were completed a specially constituted Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee obtained funds from the American Social Science Research Council. This made it possible for each of the Canadian authors to expand their studies to book length. Several new studies were added to the original six, the result being the unique co-operative academic venture now known as the *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series.*

The main purpose of this series was similar to that of the American Geographical Society publications. "The whole series of studies", wrote one of the editors, "will provide, it is hoped, an examination of the conditions and processes of settlement as exemplified in contemporary Canadian experience and will make some contribution toward the development of economic and social planning in a field where the costs of planless development are peculiarly heavy. . . . The need for systematic planning and control of settlement, if heavy financial and human costs are to be avoided, is likely to be greater in the future than it has been in the past."[20]

The main emphasis of the entire series was clearly indicated by Professor W. A. Mackintosh, the author of the first volume. Mackintosh, in discussing the geographical setting of prairie settlement, stated that Captain Palliser had made a correct assessment of the settlement prospects of the southern plains. Palliser's advice that the southern region be left unsettled should have been followed. The decision of the C.P.R. to build along the southern route was a tragic error, resulting in great economic and human costs. Clearly Professor Mackintosh believed that serious mistakes had been made, largely because of a cyclical but unreliable period of heavy rainfall in the arid regions. Encouragement was, however, drawn from the fact that in the newest Canadian area of pioneer settlement, the Peace River territory, careful surveys of soil and climatic conditions were preceding settlement. More intelligent government policies might consequently be expected.[21] The Peace River territory was the first in which the science of settlement could be tried, and therefore the great hope of all the authors of the series.

Geographers, economists, historians and sociologists all contributed to the series. Two historians, Arthur S. Morton and Chester Martin, wrote excellent and much needed studies on *The History of Prairie Settlement: and Dominion Lands Policy.*[22] A *History of Immigration Policy and Company Colonization* was also begun but unfortunately never completed and published.[23] The volume by Morton and Martin is still the best available on the subject and shows not only the successes but also the costs, mistakes and failures of the settlement period.

W. A. Mackintosh contributed an excellent volume on the *Economic Problems of the Prairies.*[24] There were several sociological studies; one on ethnic group settlements;[25] another on the settlement of the Peace River territory;[26] and a third on the social aspects of the settlement process.[27] The successes and difficulties of agricultural progress and development on the prairie frontier were outlined in another volume.[28] The last volume dealt with the Canadian forest and mining frontiers. It has a somewhat less direct relevance to the Canadian plains although it shows very interesting aspects of other frontiers.[29] All these volumes contain a great deal of historical data, although much of it was gathered by the particular methods used in the other social sciences. The environmental influence is strongly stressed in all these books, although this does not result in a full endorsation of the Turnerian hypothesis.

The Frontiers of Settlement series is the result of geographical, economic, historical, and sociological research into the settlement period of the Canadian prairies. No historian of the plains can afford to ignore it, despite the generally pessimistic views of many of the authors regarding plains settlement and their preoccupations with the problems of their day. The series, to a very large extent, characterized and dominated the writing of Canadian plains history in the 1930's. It is perhaps the best possible illustration of how the needs and problems of the historian's own time can influence his work.

This history of immigration and company colonization policies, which was to be included in the Frontiers of Settlement Series, was never completed. The work of Canada's major railways in promoting settlement did, however, receive historical attention in the 1930's from two historians; Robert England and James B. Hedges. Robert England, a one-time rural school teacher in Saskatchewan and later European superintendent of immigration for the Canadian National Railways, made good use of his own experiences and the extensive records of the Canadian National Railways to write sympathetic accounts of *The Central European Immigrant in Canada*,[30] and *The Colonization of Western Canada; A Study of Contemporary Land Settlement*.[31] In these books England discussed the characteristics of central European immigrants, their resourcefulness and ability to undergo severe deprivation during the early pioneer years, and the problems of educating and Canadianizing these new citizens. He is generally optimistic about future assimilation, but defends the Canadian mosaic pattern of settlement, pointing out how this pattern has frequently enabled settlers to help one another and has made the social and cultural adjustments less painful, although also less rapid.

Professor James B. Hedges performed a similar service in writing about the land and colonization policies of the Canadian government and about the Canadian Pacific Railway. The C.P.R.'s primary interest in building up traffic resources is seen as a valuable safeguard against undue speculative delays or ill-advised haste to make a quick profit. The "fairly fit for settlement" clause was severely criticized because of the oddities of land selection to which it led. In *The Federal Railway Land Policy of Canada*[32] and *Building the Canadian West: the Land the Colonization Policies of the Canadian Pacific Railway*,[33] Professor Hedges, like Robert England, comes to the conclusion that the railways did very much to bring settlers onto the prairies and to assist them in making prairie settlement a success.

In addition to these specialized works on railway colonization activities an excellent larger *History of Transportation in Canada* was published in the 1930's by G. P. deT. Glazebrook.[34] The paramount importance of railway services on the prairies makes this a book of vital interest to the historian of the settlement period. While many authors in the 1930's seemed preoccupied with the current "railway problem" Professor Glazebrook's book is a history rather than a pamphlet urging particular solutions.[35]

If the Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series had a shortcoming it must be that it contains very little about the political history of the plains during the settlement period. It deals primarily with geographic, economic and social problems. One important book about political affairs in the west was, however, published in the 1930's. This was J. W. Dafoe's biography of Clifford Sifton,[36] owner of the influential Manitoba Free Press and a powerful prairie Liberal. Dafoe's book was a work of love and he tells much about his former employer's role in the various public issues of his day. Sifton was a man of first rate abilities, but he has always been something of an enigma. Dafoe's account of his public actions is useful and enlightening, but it does not constitute a complete explanation of the man or his times. On vital points, such as the details of Liberal party organization and financing and on the sources of Sifton's enormous wealth, Dafoe tells very little. Even Sifton's acquisition of the *Manitoba Free Press*, the paper Dafoe edited for so many years, remains shrouded in mystery. One cannot help but think that Dafoe did not tell all that he knew.

A further attempt to delve into the mysteries of political organization was undertaken by Escott Ried who published a suggestive article entitled "The Saskatchewan Liberal Machine before 1929."[37] More work of this sort by both political scientists and historians is needed, and there is evidence that some of it is being undertaken in the politically more conscious 1960's. In the 1930's social and economic concerns were uppermost in the minds of plains historians. Aside from Dafoe's work there was very little reliable western Canadian political history being written in the 1930's.

One final and very important historical work of the 1930's must be mentioned. That is George F. G. Stanley's *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions.*[38] *The Riel Rebellions have long* been an interesting and controversial subject of historical writing. Professor Stanley's work was preceded in the 1930's by two lesser histories with strong French Canadian viewpoints,[39] but Stanley's book is certainly the best and perhaps the definitive study of those disturbances. In his book Stanley offers a significant new interpretation. He argues that the Riel rebellions were not primarily racial or religious conflicts, although they resulted in considerable racial and religious turmoil in

Ontario and Quebec, but a normal frontier problem in which a primitive society clashed with a more civilized and advancing way of life. Where A. S. Morton believed that one of the factors bringing Riel and the Metis into rebellion was their disappointment about the change of location of the C.P.R. mainline which would leave them without rail service, Stanley believed the very coming of the railway, a harbinger of a new settled way of life threatening the semi-nomadic habits of the Metis and Indians, was the real cause of the trouble. There was no place in the new settled and civilized way of life for the Indian and Métis, and protest was a natural and perhaps inevitable response. The failings and shortcomings of the federal government are emphasised, and the problems and difficulties of the Metis are sympathetically dealt with. The study is an excellent piece of work, although it must dampen the reader's enthusiasm for certain aspects of our frontier history. There were victims and failures as well as successes and victories. In the 1930's failures and problems were very much on the minds of historians, and Professor Stanley pointed to yet another dimension of the cost of settling the prairies.

Apparently the exigencies of a world war and the large volume of writing about the prairies in the 1930's produced something of a lull in the 1940's when few books of plains history were published. These either summed up some of the findings presented earlier, or filled gaps in the historical record. V. C. Fowke's *Canadian Agricultural Policy: the Historical Pattern*,[40] reviewed the findings of earlier economists, brought them up to date, and provided a very valuable historical framework for the study of agricultural problems. A monograph by C. C. Lingard on *Territorial government in Canada: The autonomy question in the Old North West Territories*[41] told the history of an important phase in the political history and evolution of the prairies. Lingard makes it clear that autonomy was popular in the West but that its specific implementation was decided in Ottawa and imposed on a quiescent West but a sharply dissenting territorial premier.

A third book published in the 1940's is Paul F. Sharp's *The American Revolt in Western Canada: A Survey showing American Parallels*.[42] Sharp, an American, showed how the ideas of agrarian radicals crossed the international boundary and had a very significant effect on Canadian history. Farmers' protest movements probably reflect the closest parallels between western Canadian and western American history. Paul Sharp showed just how close these parallels were.

If Canadian plains historiography before 1929 is dominated by a romantic view of the growth and development of the west, and the 1930's produced exhaustive studies reflecting a pessimism characteristic of that time, the 1950's saw a preoccupation with political eccentricities of the Canadian plains. As in the 1930's, a series of books written by authors from various disciplines and using different ideological and methodological procedures, dominated the historiography of the 1950's. This time it was a ten volume series entitled *Social Credit in Alberta: Its Background and Development*. This series examined not only the Social Credit movement of Alberta, but a good many other subjects which formed the background of that movement. The series was an attempt to deal in a comprehensive way with a period of western history which brought to the surface much that was politically new and unusual, the most extreme form being the Social Credit movement of Alberta. Three historians wrote excellent accounts of Social Credit's political predecessors, the Progressive Party,[43] the Alberta Liberal party,[44] and of one of western Canada's most serious labour disturbances, the Winnipeg General Strike.[45] Sociologists published studies of earlier Canadian protest movements,[46] and a case study of the social and economic disintegration in a smaller rural area of Alberta particularly hard hit by depression.[47] Political scientists studied the quasi-democratic, quasi-plebiscitary nature of Alberta politics,[48] and the effect of federal disallowance of Social Credit legislation on the Alberta movement.[49] There was a book on religious life in the province,[50] and a study by a leading economist on the relationships and interactions between national policies and prairie needs and difficulties.[51] The last volume, written by a social philosopher, was a careful and well documented social history of the Social Credit movement in Alberta.[52]

The Social Credit series included some excellent historical writing and told much about Canadian protest movements generally and specifically about Social Credit in Alberta. Similarities with American frontier experiences were pointed out, but the uniqueness of much that happened in western Canada was also stressed. Seldom have regional protest parties received as much scholarly attention as did prairie protest movements in the 1950's. The Social Credit series is indispensible for anyone who wishes to understand the prairies, their problems and some of the solutions attempted.

It is somewhat surprising that the Social Credit series paid only very scant attention to the other and rather different protest movement of the prairies, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. But the history of that movement was also written in the 1950's, three books deserving particular mention. In 1950 D. E. McHenry wrote The *Third Force in Canada: the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation*, 1932-1948.[53] This was followed in 1959 by S. M. Lipset's *Agrarian Socialism: The Co-operative Commonwealth in Saskatchewan*,[54] and Kenneth McNaught's biography of the C.C.F.'s first national leader, James Shaver Woodsworth, who was described as *A Prophet in Politics*.[55] These studies showed both the national impact and policies of the C.C.F. and the details of local party organization.

Also appearing in the 1950's were several other books not directly related to the theme of political protest. Paul F. Sharp brought out a book entitled *Whoop-Up Country: The Canadian American West, 1865-1885.*[56] In it he discussed the essential geographic and early economic unity of the upper high plains region of Alberta and Montana, and how in time the international boundary and east-west railway systems on both sides of that boundary split the region into two separate parts.

A new, more comprehensive and scholarly history of Manitoba was published by W. L. Morton in 1957,[57] and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police commissioned John Peter Turner to write an official two volume history of the force from its beginnings in 1873 until 1893.[58] An excellent study of *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North West Territories*, 1890-97,[59] was published by Lewis H. Thomas. In it the story of an important but not very well remembered period in the history and evolution of the North-West Territories is told clearly and authoritatively. The granting of responsible government seemed to place the territories in the mainstream of Canadian political development, but perhaps many of the roots of later prairie discontent lay in the territorial period and the issues described by Dr. Thomas.

No single interest seems to dominate Canadian plains historiography of the 1960's which include biographies of two prairie editors,[60] detailed studies of several ethnic group settlements on the prairies,[61] a more specialized work on the government of Manitoba,[62] a new and comprehensive biography of Louis Riel by G. F. G. Stanley,[63] a well edited and much needed selection of geographical readings about the Interior of Western Canada,[64] a comprehensive and well written history of the Canadian National Railways[65] and a shorter but also carefully researched history of the Canadian Pacific Railway.[66]

Any review of historical writings in the 1960's is likely to remain incomplete and highly subjective. What might be written in the 1970's must, of course, be even more subjective. Several important books have, however, been published in the 1970's. The most important and widely read of these are undoubtedly Pierre Burton's two volumes on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway.[67] Berton focusses on national issues, treating the C.P.R. as a great national institution. The company, however, was for many years one of the most important institutions on the prairies and its history is inextricably related to the history of the prairies. Berton is at his best when he describes social and political events connected with the construction of the railway. His books focus on people and are best categorized as popular social history. A promised volume on the opening up of the West will undoubtedly further demonstrate Berton's commitment to social history.

Social history of the prairies is also the concern of ex-newspaperman James Gray, who offers incisive personal reminiscences and documented studies on life and society in the 1920's and 1930's.[68] A different perspective is provided by Richard Allen in his book, *The Social Passion*:

Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28,[69] in which the author develops the religious dimensions of progressivism in the West. On a related topic, a careful and well documented examination of the Winnipeg General Strike within the context of the Canadian labour movement have led David Bercuson to important new insights and interpretations of that momentous event. In a recent article Bercuson goes a long way to modify and revise D. C. Master's earlier study of the strike.[70]

The interests of prairie historians thus far in the 1970's appear to focus on social history. This interest is also reflected in the decision of the University of Toronto Press,[71] Coles Publishing Company,[72] and M. G. Hurtig, Ltd.,[73] to reprint a number of older books and collected documents on life and society in the West. The reprinting of these older books, together with the newer works published or in preparation in the 1970's, may well lead to a major reassessment of prairie society during the settlement period.

The optimism of the early chroniclers and the pessimism of the writers of the 1930's has yielded much valuable historical information. Today the availability of hitherto restricted federal government records provides new opportunities for accurate research. Large new accessions are rapidly supplementing the Department of Interior records sent to the Public Archives many years ago. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have opened most of their early records to responsible researchers. The Canadian National Railway has transferred its old records, including a very large collection of land, immigration and colonization records, to the Archives. The federal immigration service is in the process of opening its records up to 1939. The Privy Council has opened all cabinet records up to 1957 and the records of the Department of Indian Affairs are open to 1949. These are some of the necessary source materials to be used by historians in a re-examination of the settlement period. Perhaps some of the unduly pessimistic passages in the Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series can now be revised.

Much work still remains to be done on the political history of the plains, particularly the history of the Liberal and Conservative parties. With the exception of Lewis G. Thomas' book, we still have very little about these two national parties, how they succeeded and where they failed on the prairies. Very useful studies of the protest parties have been completed, but similar studies of the old-line parties are needed. Some of these are presently being written, often as M.A. or Ph.D. theses. It is to be hoped that publication will follow.

Undoubtedly one of the most neglected aspects of Canadian plains history is the role of the Indians. Aside from the published reminiscences of an early Indian commissioner,[74] a collection of Indian treaties and surrenders[75] and G. F. G. Stanley's history of the Riel rebellions,[76] very few reliable historical studies of the Indians are available. Some of the things written about the Indians are incredibly bad history, particularly when authors try to project present problems or concerns into the past without any attempt to understand the past in its own terms; in the terms that Indians long dead must have viewed their existence and problems. The opening of federal Indian records and increased concern about our native peoples should make it possible to write better and more accurate histories of the prairie Indians.

One final remark is needed. Some of the most useful work in western Canadian historiography can be found in three important series, Canada and Its Provinces, The Canadian Frontiers of Settlement, and Social Credit in Alberta. All these were co-operative academic ventures in which scholars from various disciplines participated. If I have claimed these series as historical works it is because they are so useful, in fact indispensible, to the historian of the prairies. If lessons can be learned from the past, one must surely be that interdisciplinary co-operation can lead to some very good historical writing and to a better understanding of what has happened on the Canadian prairies.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Frederick Jackson Turner, *"The Significance of History,"* as quoted in Fritz Stern, ed., *The Varieties of History from Voltaire to the Present*, New York, 1956.

[2] For the earlier period see Lewis G. Thomas, "Historiography of the Fur Trade," *Alberta Historical* Review, Vol. 17 (Winter, 1969), pp. 21-27 (published in revised form in this series of papers).

[3] This journal was later edited by W. L. Morton and published under the title, *Red River Journal and other papers relative to the Red River Resistance of 1869-70*, (Champlain Society No. 34), Toronto, 1956.

[4] Other historical works by Alexander Begg include, *The Creation of Manitoba; or A History of the Red River Troubles*, Toronto, 1871; *"Dot it Down;" A Story of Life in the North-West*, Toronto, 1871; *Ten Years in Winnipeg*, Winnipeg, 1879; *A History of the North-West*, 3 Volumes, Toronto, 1894-5.

[5] Alexander Begg, *A History of the North-West*, Vol. 1, Toronto, 1894, p. vi.

[6] George Bryce, *Manitoba: Its Infancy, Growth and Present Condition*, London, 1882; later published as *A History of Manitoba: Its Resources and People*, Toronto, 1906.

[7] John Macoun, *Manitoba and the Great North-West; the field for investment; the home of the emigrant, being a full and complete history of the country*, Guelph, 1882; Graeme Mercer Adams, *The Canadian North-West: Its History and Its Troubles from the Early Days of the Fur Trade to the Era of the Railway and the Settler*, Toronto, 1885; Robert B. Hill, *Manitoba: History of its early Settlement, Development and Resources*, Toronto, 1890; Roderick George MacBeth, *The Making of the Canadian West, being the reminiscences of an eyewitness*, Toronto, 1905; Frank Howard Schofild, *The Story of Manitoba*, Winnipeg, 1913; Norman Fergus Black, *History of Saskatchewan and the North-West Territories, 2 volumes*, Regina, 1913; E. H. Oliver, *The Canadian North-West: Its Early Development and Legislative Records*, 2 volumes, Ottawa, 1914-15; Margaret McWilliams, *Manitoba Milestones*, Toronto and London, 1928.

[8] Roderick MacBeth, *The Romance of the Canadian Pacific Railway*, Toronto, 1924; James H. E. Secretan, *Canada's great highway from first stake to last spike*, London, 1924; John M. Gibbon, *Steel of Empire: The Romantic History of the Canadian Pacific Railway; the Northwest Passage of Today*, New York, 1935, republished under the title *The Romantic History of the Canadian Pacific Railway; the Northwest Passage of Today* in 1937; Ernest John Chambers, *The Royal*

North-West Mounted Police, a Corps History, Montreal, Ottawa 1906; Arthur L. Haydon, *The Riders of the Plains,* Toronto, 1910; Roderick MacBeth, *Policing the Plains,* London, New York, 1921; Cécil Denny, *The Law Marches West,* Toronto, 1939; R. C. Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Canadian Mounted Police,* New York, 1938; and others. By far the best history of the Canadian Pacific Railway during this period was Harold A. Innis' *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway,* Toronto, 1923, about which more will be said later.

[9] Adam Shortt and Arthur G. Doughty, ed., *Canada and Its provinces, Vols. 19 and 20, The Prairie Provinces,* Toronto, 1914.

[10] John Blue, *Alberta Past and Present,* Chicago, 1924; John Hawkes, *The Story of Saskatchewan and Its People,* Chicago, 1924.

[11] Blue *Ibid.,* Vol. I, p.v.

[12] William Irvine, *The Farmers in Politics,* Toronto, 1921; Louis A. Wood, *A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada,* Toronto, 1924; W. A. MacKintosh, *Agricultural Co-operation in Western Canada,* (Queen's University Studies Vol. 2), Toronto, 1924; Harold S. Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation in Western Canada,* (Harvard Economic Studies), Cambridge, 1928.

[13] Harold A. Innis, *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway,* Toronto, 1923.

[14] Walter N. Sage, "Some Aspects of the Frontier in Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Association Report, 1928,* p. 62.

[15] *Ibid.,* pp. 62-63.

[16] John L. McDougall, "The Frontier School and Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Association Report, 1929,* pp. 121-125; A. L. Burt, "The Frontier in the History of New France," *Canadian Historical Association Report, 1940,* pp. 93-99, G. F. G. Stanley, "Western Canada and the Frontier Thesis," *Canadian Historical Association Report, 1940,* pp. 105-114.

[17] Morris Zaslow. "The Frontier Hypothesis in recent Historiography," *Canadian Historical Review,* Vol. 29, (June 1948) p. 162.

[18] Isaiah Bowman. *The Pioneer Fringe,* (American Geographical Society Special Publication No. 15), New York, 1931.

[19] *Pioneer Settlement, Co-operative Studies by Twenty-Six Authors,* (American Geographical Society Special Publication No. 14), New York, 1932.

[20] W. A. MacKintosh, *Prairie Settlement: The Geographical Setting,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. I), Toronto, 1935.

[21] *Loc. cit.*

[22] Arthur S. Morton and Chester Martin, *History of Prairie Settlement; and Dominion Lands Policy,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. II), Toronto, 1938.

[23] D. A. MacArthur and W. A. Carrothers, *History of Immigration Policy and Company Colonization,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. III), Toronto, 1939.

[24] W. A. MacKintosh, *Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. IV), Toronto, 1935.

[25] C. A. Dawson, *Group Settlement; Ethnic Communities in Western Canada,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. VII), Toronto, 1936.

[26] C. A. Dawson, *The Settlement of the Peace River Country: A Study of a Pioneer Area,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. VI), Toronto, 1934.

[27] C. A. Dawson, *Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces: The Social Side of the Settlement Process,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. VIII), Toronto, 1940.

[28] R. W. Murchie, *Agricultural Progress on the Prairie Frontier,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. V), Toronto, 1936.

[29] A. R. M. Lower and H. A. Innis, *Settlement and the Forest and Mining Frontiers,* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. IX), Toronto, 1941.

[30] Robert England, *The Central European Immigrant in Canada,* Toronto, 1929.

[31] Robert England, *The Colonization of Western Canada; A Study of Contemporary Land Settlement, 1896-1934,* London, 1936.

[32] James B. Hedges, *The Federal Railway Land Policy of Canada,* (Harvard Historical Monographs III), Cambridge, Mass., 1934.

[33] James B. Hedges, *Building the Canadian West: The Land and Colonization Policies of the Canadian Pacific Railway,* New York and Toronto, 1939.

[34] G. P. deT. Glazebrook, *A History of Transportation in Canada,* Toronto, 1938.

[35] Leslie T. Fournier, *Railway Nationalization in Canada: The Problem of the Canadian National Railways,* Toronto, 1935; Lesslie R. Thomson, *The Canadian Railway Problem: Some Economic Aspects of Canadian Transportation and a Suggested Solution for the Railway Problem,* Toronto, 1938.

[36] J. W. Dafoe, *Clifford Sifton in Relation to his Times*, Toronto, 1931.

[37] Escott Reid, "The Saskatchewan Liberal machine before 1929," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. II (Feb. 1936), pp. 27-40.

[38] George F. G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions*, London, 1936.

[39] A. G. Morice, *A Critical History of the Red River Insurrection after official documents and non-Catholic sources*, Winnipeg, 1935; A. H. de Tremaudan, *Histoire de la metisse dans l'ouest canadien*, Montreal, 1935.

[40] V. C. Fowke, *Canadian Agricultural Policy: the Historical Pattern*, Toronto, 1946.

[41] C. C. Lingard, *Territorial Government in Canada, the Autonomy Question in the old North-West Territories*, Toronto, 1946.

[42] Paul F. Sharp. *The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada: A Survey Showing American Parallels*. Minneapolis, 1948.

[43] W. L. Morton, *The Progressive Party in Canada*, Toronto, 1950.

[44] D. C. Masters, *The Winnipeg General Strike*, Toronto, 1950.

[45] Jean Burnet, *Next-Year Country*, Toronto, 1952.

[46] C. B. Macpherson, *Democracy in Alberta, Toronto [1953]* 1970.

[47] J. R. Mallory, *Social Credit and the Federal Power in Canada*, Toronto, 1954.

[48] W. E. Mann, *Sect. Cult and Church in Alberta*, Toronto, 1957.

[49] V. C. Fowke, *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy*, Toronto, 1957.

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[53] D. E. McHenry, *The Third Force in Canada; the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1932-1948*, Berkeley, 1950.

[54] S. M. Lipset, Agrarian Socialism: *The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1959.

[55] Kenneth McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, Toronto, 1959.

[56] Paul F. Sharp, *Whoop-Up Country: The Canadian-American West*, 1865-1885, Minneapolis, 1955.

[57] W. L. Morton, *Manitoba, A History*, Toronto, 1957.

[58] John Peter Turner, *The North-West Mounted Police, 1873-1893*, 2 Volumes, Ottawa, 1950.

[59] Lewis H. Thomas, *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North-West Territories, 1870-97*, Toronto, 1956.

[60] Ramsay Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press*, Toronto, 1963; Steele, C. F., *Prairie Editor: The Life and Times of Buchanan of Lethbridge*, Toronto, 1961.

[61] W. Kristjanson, *The Icelandic People in Manitoba; A Manitoba Saga*, Winnipeg, 1965; Vladimir J. Kaye, *Early Ukrainian Settlement in Canada, 1895-1900*, Toronto, 1964.

[62] M. S. Donnelly, *The Government of Manitoba*, (Canadian Government Series No. 14) Toronto, 1963.

[63] G. F. G. Stanley, *Louis Riel*, Toronto, 1963.

[64] John Warkentin, *The Western Interior of Canada*, (Carleton Library No. 15) Toronto, 1964.

[65] G. R. Stevens, *Canadian National Railways*, 2 Volumes, Toronto, 1960-62.

[66] J. Lorne McDougall, *Canadian Pacific*, Montreal, 1968.

[67] Pierre Berton, *The National Dream, The Great Railway, 1871-1881*, and *The Last Spike, The Great Railway, 1881-1885*, Toronto, 1969 and 1971.

[68] James Gray, *The Winter Years*, Toronto, 1966. *The Boy from Winnipeg*, Toronto, 1969. *Red Lights on the Prairies*, Toronto, 1971.

[69] Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada*, 1914-1928, Toronto, 1971.

[70] David J. Bercuson, "The Winnipeg General Strike, Collective Bargaining and the One Big Union Issue," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LI, (June, 1970), pp. 164-176.

[71] Items in the University of Toronto Series already published or to be published very shortly and relating to the prairie west include: *The Wretched of Canada: Letters to R. B. Bennett, 1930-1935*, Introduction, Linda Grayson and Michael Bliss; *My Neighbor*, by J. S. Woodsworth, Introduction, Richard Allen; *In Times Like These*, by Nellie McClung, Introduction, Veronica Strong-Boag; *The*

Bunkhouse Man, by E. W. Bradwin, Introduction, Jean Burnet; *Strangers Within Our Gates, by J. S. Woodsworth*, Introduction, Marilyn Barber.

[72] Items in the Coles Canadian Collection of interest to the student of prairie history after 1870 include: *Canadian Savage Folk, The Native Tribes of Canada*, by John MacLean; *Handbook of Indians* of Canada, by the Geographic Board of Canada; *India Treaties and Surrenders; Pathfinding on Plain and Prairie*, by John McDougall; *The History of the North-West Rebellion of 1885*, by Charles Pelham; *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader*, by J. Long; *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians*, by The Hon. Alexander Morris; *The Story of Louis Riel, the Rebel Chief; Ocean to Ocean, Sandford Fleming's Expedition through Canada in 1872*, by George M. Grant; *Stories from Indian Wigwams and Northern Campfires*, by Egerton Young; *The North-West Passage* by Land, by Viscount Milton and Dr. W. B. Cheadle; *The Indians of Canada, their manners and customs*, by John McLean.

[73] Items in the Hurtig Canadian Reprint Series of interest here include: *Johnny Chinook, Tall Tales and True from the Canadian West*, by Robert E. Gard; *The Great Lone Land, A Narrative of Travel and Adventure in the Northwest of America*, by William F. Butler; *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains, A Diary and Narrative of Travel, Sport, and Adventure during a Journey through the Hudson's Bay Company's Territories*, by the Earl of Southesk.

[74] A. Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories*, Toronto, 1880.

[75] *Indian Treaties and Surrenders, 1680-1890*, 2 Volumes, Ottawa, 1915.

[76] G. F. G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions*, London, 1936.

6

INTERPRETING PRAIRIE POLITICS

DAVID E. SMITH

The prairie provinces of Canada possess a heritage rich in political theory and practice. On the one hand, sharing in the wheat economy of the West and faced by common problems arising from the federal system, the prairie provinces have provided a great forum for regional political activity. On the other hand, each province has created its own distinctive political system wherein indigenous political movements have flourished. It is no exaggeration to say that politics, like wheat, has been a preoccupation of the prairies. It is therefore surprising in a survey of prairie political research to note how little the region's politics has been studied. Since national political research has only just begun to flourish, perhaps one should not expect active provincial and regional investigation. Yet it is remarkable that an area which has long possessed such fertile political terrain should remain almost virgin land to the political scientist.

The following comments on prairie political research are limited to published material under several general headings: political culture and institutions; parties and electoral behaviour; non-party politics; federal-provincial relations; and political biography. While one conclusion of this paper is that there is a need for more primary research in prairie politics, a substantial body of information still exists. For this reason and because of the unorganized nature of political bibliography in Canada this paper can obviously make no claim to be an exhaustive survey of all the relevant literature.

Prairie politics has developed within a vast region of recent settlement and as a consequence the frontier and its influence have never been far removed. While recognizing this fact, it would be inappropriate, and probably repetitive of other comments in this volume, for a political scientist to discuss American frontier theories and their relevance to Canadian experience. For a study of prairie political culture, however, it is necessary to recognize the contribution of the frontier and nowhere has this been made more evident to the researcher than in the *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement* series. Composed of nine volumes, published in the decade of depression and drought, this venture into co-operative academic research provides a unique understanding of the prairies as a region. Land

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utilization for instance was the key to prairie settlement and with the benefit of an excellent study by Arthur S. Morton and Chester Martin, the political scientist can appreciate its subsequent effects on prairie political development.[1] Another volume of the series, *Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces* delineates six periods of settlement and, among other subjects, examines prairie transportation, finances and taxation. The complex relationships then existing between local, municipal, and provincial governments are still of interest to the political scientist, as are the authors' comments on the nature of prairie man. In a chapter on Alberta finances they comment that "in Alberta, the recognition of the helplessness of the individual, in the face of the intimate economic interdependence of men and of areas has prevented the survival of an extreme individualistic point of view."[2] The same could be said of life in Saskatchewan or Manitoba.

If one is to understand the prairie provinces, comparative studies are essential, yet they have been scarce. One of the earliest, however, appears in the fifth volume of the series, *Agricultural Progress on the Prairie Frontier*.[3] The authors select nine areas in the three prairie provinces and study their settlement, economy, and people. Such comparisons constitute an important step in defining differences among the provinces rather than assuming, as is so often the case, similarities. The volume that to this writer is most suggestive of political themes is the eighth, *Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces: The Social Side of the Settlement Process*.[4] Again comparisons are drawn, this time from the experience of ten areas in the prairie region chosen because they illustrate what the authors term stable, transitional new pioneer, and chronic fringe localities. Their remarks on early experiments with municipal doctor and hospital plans and voluntary sickness insurance schemes in Saskatchewan and Alberta are especially pertinent for the political observer of the 1960s. Similarily, their comment that the exodus of farm families from rural regions between 1920 and 1930 created a "lack of social institutions in many neighbourhoods . . . reminiscent of early pioneer stages of settlement" has recently been echoed by a study of the Canadian Centre for Community Studies.[5] Another observation that needs to be pursued in light of recent knowledge of prairie electoral behaviour is that ethnic segregation "reduced footlooseness and made for continuity in the settlement process." This phenomenon must have had considerable implications for provincial party organization and while it has been remarked upon elsewhere, no published material exists to indicate its serious study.

Two relatively recent works which pick up several of the themes of this last volume are Jean Brunet's *Next-Year Country: A Study of Rural Social Organization* and W. E. Mann's *Sect, Cult, and Church in Alberta*.[6] As contributions to the ten volume series on *Social Credit in*

Alberta: Its Background and Development, they are concerned with helping to explain the appearance of that movement. In the first volume the focus is on a small community (Hanna, Alberta) and the social and cultural consequences for it of the disasters of the thirties and of the more recent mechanization of agriculture. Anyone who has travelled through a small prairie town has observed the "decline" that Brunet seeks to explain. In the second volume the author considers the religious sentiments stimulated by the movement of prairie people to urban regions. Both studies provide needed enlightenment on the nature of prairie political culture.

The ethnic heterogeneity of the prairie provinces is one of their most striking features. From the earliest years of this century immigrants and immigration policy have provided favourite topics for political comment. The books of Robert England, a representative of the C.N.R.'s Department of Colonization, attest to this interest; for example in his *The Central European Immigrant in Canada* he includes a questionnaire which was given to teachers in rural Saskatchewan communities to solicit opinions on non-English immigrants and the problems of their assimilation in Canada.[7] At one time the C.N.R. awarded prizes to immigrant communities making the greatest progress in education, agriculture, citizenship and "the arts."[8] How much of this interest in immigration arose purely from a desire to inculcate British civic values is difficult to gauge. Certainly the existence of this desire in some circles cannot be disputed.[9] One of the most thorough analyses of group settlement on the prairies is also to be found in another volume of the *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement* series.[10] Settlement of a different kind, but of major political importance, was that of Americans moving north. Much of western Canada's distinctive political tradition has been attributed to these people and for that reason the work of Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples*, is of considerable import.[11]

While the studies of immigration that have been published to date contribute to our knowledge of the prairie's political culture, the lack of particular ethnic studies is regrettable. Paul Yuzyk's *The Ukrainians in Manitoba: A Social History* is an exception, but one that illustrates the point. His comment that "Manitoba's Ukrainians have been much more active in provincial politics than their compatriots in Alberta and Saskatchewan" immediately suggests some obvious questions that can only be answered by similar studies in those provinces.[12]

One hesitates in a general discussion of the ethnic heterogeneity of the prairies to mention the French Canadians for fear of being accused of treating them as immigrants in their own country. Yet, whatever position one recognizes for French Canadians in Confederation, one cannot deny the early prominence of these people in Western Canada. Certainly the histories of Manitoba and particularly those of the Manitoba school question examine the role played by French Canadians in that province's political system. Yet, aside from this type of treatment, reference to French Canadians and politics on the prairies is sparse. Except for minor mention of them in the first two volumes of the *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, the only piece of scholarly research that comes to mind is Keith A. McLeod's contribution "Politics, Schools and the French Language, 1881-1931," published in *Politics in Saskatchewan*.[13] It should be added that some articles, which will be considered below, have been published on prairie electoral behaviour particularly between 1925 and 1940 and that they analyze French-Canadian along with other "ethnic" voting patterns.

No survey of the political culture of the prairies would be complete without some consideration of agriculture and its effects on politics. The literature on farmers and politics, unlike some topics, is substantial—for instance their participation in non-party politics, their entry into and exit from direct party activity and their attraction to the mechanics of populism—but the psychology of the farmer is dealt with in a hit and miss fashion. It is generally agreed that the influence of environment was all-persuasive. In the opinion of some writers, like Stephen Leacock, "the frame was too big for the picture."[14] For others the environment contained a suggestion of a "law of frontier settlement"; G. V. Ferguson commented on the eve of the Alberta election of 1935 that the people of the prairies had been unhappy "in their old, settled environment [and] the wilder they were, the further west they went, until they were stopped by the mountains."[15] Another view of the environment was its stimulus to the "creative impulse" of prairie man. Edmund H. Oliver suggests that distance, "drouth," and settlement required a special response from the farmer if he was to make a success of his new existence.[16]

A part of the story of agriculture on the prairies is the story of the depression and drought. No writer on prairie development can omit reference to the devastation caused by these events and no writer has depicted the havoc more clearly than G. E. Britnell.[17] In *The Wheat Economy* he presents a picture of the effects of these disasters on the economy, the institutions and the people of the region and he considers the problems of rehabilitation. The statistics which he cites record more profoundly than any eye-witness account the total collapse of the region. In the preface to this work, Harold Innis pertinently observed that "the persistent difficulty of adjusting institutions combining federalism and modern capitalism . . . involves a drain on economic energies." One aspect of the depression which has received some more recent scholarly attention is the administration of relief.[18] Together these articles indicate prairie attitudes towards welfare, and federal-provincial-municipal problems in administering it. For a sample of the attitudes of the time, no better source can be suggested than the forty-eight briefs presented to the

Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations during its sittings in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta and the official submissions by the three provincial governments.[19] An imaginative interpretation of these years is contained in an article in the *Queen's Quarterly* during 1937 by C. S. Burchill wherein he traces the similarities between the course of events in western Canada since 1918 and events preceding the American revolution.[20] Burchill's point while imaginative is still a valid one. Tension was great, political ferment did run high, but the crucial differences between the two situations were that the regional disparities in Canada, then as now, dampened the revolt, and the central government in Ottawa at least appeared sympathetic to the plight of the western provinces. Even though the "New Deal" came to naught, the prairies' response to the depression re-invigorated the federal government after several decades of flagging leadership.[21] An entirely different response to conditions of the period were proposals first for western secession and second for prairie unification. To this writer's knowledge neither proposal has received scholarly study.[22]

One final theme present in most discussions of prairie political culture is the competition which the West has experienced between British and American political traditions and practices. In 1921, in an unsigned review article in *The Quarterly Review*, a contrast was drawn between the two influences.[23] The author professed to see a contradiction within the New National Policy of the Canadian Council of Agriculture by its alternate emphasis on majoritariansim as evidenced in its advocacy of referendum and on minority rights in its promotion of proportional representation. The one writer who has written most on this theme is W. L. Morton. In his *Manitoba: A History* and in such articles as "The Bias of Prairie Politics" in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* and "A Century of Plain and Parkland" in the *Alberta Historical Review*,[24] he discusses the original Ontario political model which was duplicated in Manitoba in the seventies and the change wrought upon the model by British, American, and European immigration. In common, he says, the immigrants were escaping hardship, and the closing of opportunities in their native countries, and were seeking a "viable utopia." The dialectic of prairie politics, it would seem, eventually resulted in "prairie apoliticalism." The interplay of British, American and Canadian attitudes and policies and their effects upon the West has again been recently discussed in the *Alberta Historical Review*.[25]

The institutions of this political culture were planted firmly in British parliamentary democracy and have taken root in this century (perhaps a few years longer in Manitoba's case, although the crisis of the nineties changed that province's political system enough that it too began the twentieth century with new forms). Yet, as they grew, they appeared more of a hybrid than an offshoot of the original plant. Since this has not necessarily been the experience of all provincial governments, the reasons for this prairie development warrant investigation.[26]

Despite the overwhelming interest in politics on the prairies, little has been published concerning the governmental institutions of its provinces. The personalities of many of their political leaders and the inventiveness of their citizens in non-party politics have diverted attention from this most important subject. To date, the attempt of greatest breadth in this area has been M. S. Donnelly's *The Government of Manitoba.*[27] Professor Donnelly is the only political scientist to undertake a study of a total provincial political system. As with all such approaches the more interesting particulars frequently are submerged in the general description in an attempt to integrate material. Yet it is the sole attempt at broad investigation and one whose value suggests the need for similar undertakings on Saskatchewan and Alberta. One point made by Donnelly, and by other writers about Manitoba, is that unlike her sister provinces she had no colonial or territorial experience to fall back on in her experiment with provincial status. She was, in the words of one writer, "conjured into being."[28] This contrast between Manitoba and Saskatchewan and Alberta is made abundantly clear in the literature on territorial government in the North-West prior to 1905.[29] One early piece on Manitoba's political institutions which should be mentioned, if only because such thorough-going institutional studies seem so rare in a period according to many modern political scientists characterized by excessive devotion to institutions, is "Our Legislative Mills: The Single-Chamber Legislature of Manitoba" in an issue of the *National Civic Review* for 1924.[30]

The Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly has probably received the greatest recent attention of any of the prairie legislatures, though more in special studies than in general examination. A knowledgeable survey of the history and role of the clerkship in the Assembly has been provided by a recent occupant of that office.[31] A former Clerk Assistant has also examined the Assembly's experience in controlling the public purse with special reference to the problems faced by the Saskatchewan M.L.A.[32] Another study of the membership of the Assembly since 1905 examines the electoral strength, legislative experiences and socio-economic backgrounds of the province's M.L.A.s.[33] One study which provides a wealth of information on the Saskatchewan system of government has been written by Evelyn Eager. Based on her wide knowledge of Saskatchewan politics, reflected in her unpublished Ph.D. thesis on "The Government of Saskatchewan," this particular article recounts the events which agitated the days of provincial autonomy.[34] Two important studies related to the Legislative Assembly as much as to political parties consider the conflicting demands of parliamentary and party groups on C.C.F. leaders during their years of power. The paradox of party democracy, according to one writer, is that it reduces the Legislature's power.[35]

It is at this point that the gap in the literature of prairie politics becomes most noticeable, for search as one might, there is no work, even of article length, devoted to an examination of the political institutions of Alberta. The various studies of party and non-party politics to be discussed below all consider the legislature, the cabinet and their operations to some degree, it is true, though they usually are devoted to the period before the Second World War. How can one explain this gap? Perhaps S. D. Clark's comment on the destruction of party government in Alberta might also apply to this stultified interest in provincial government: "In the emphasis of Social Credit upon results rather than means, poor citizenship in the form of lack of concern for the actual management of political affairs became almost a condition of membership in the party."[36]

Other topics related to the legislature and representation are the franchise, electoral machinery and proposals for and experiments with direct democracy. On the first two topics published research is scarce. One recent piece entitled "Votes for Saskatchewan Women," deals with the battle for the female franchise and relates it to the temperance movement; otherwise, published material is virtually non-existent.[37] Very little has been published on the electoral machinery of the prairie provinces. This is a little surprising given Alberta and Manitoba's experiments with the alternative and single transferable vote. Redistribution, always a politically sensitive issue, has received no concentrated study in Saskatchewan or Manitoba, although the latter province created an Electoral Divisions Boundaries Commission in 1954 and one might expect some interest beyond newspaper accounts on how it is faring.[38] In Alberta a study of the recent redistribution of that province's seats has been published.[39] The financing of elections on the prairies is even less explored save for a few comments on the provincial C.C.F. and N.D.P. in Saskatchewan included in a study commissioned by the federal Committee on Election Expenses.[40] The democratization of the political process through direct legislation or referendum and plebiscite have been studied in Saskatchewan by Elizabeth Chambers and in Manitoba by W. L. Morton.[41] The importance of direct legislation according to Professor Morton is that it was seen as an alternative to third party activity, thus avoiding the evils of partisanship and the potential for agrarian fractionalism.

It is of interest that the study of local government seems to have engaged the attention of scholars of prairie politics as much as has provincial government. The work of Eric Hanson on local government in Alberta; the several articles by A. N. Reid on the history of local government, first in the North-West Territories and then in Saskatchewan; and the study of ethnic participation in municipal government in Manitoba by Murray Donnelly bear witness to this interest.[42]

One final area of prairie political experience which also has not borne scholarly examination is the experiment with government ownership and operation of public services. The western provinces have enjoyed a lively history of government supported or government run enterprises—electricity and telephones come first to mind. But this experience has occasioned little comment, although it ought to have.[43] In all prairie provinces, political debate today frequently occurs along an artificial line dividing "free-enterprisers" from "socialists." And yet, it was "free-enterprise" Liberal or Conservative governments which initiated many of the prairies' first public enterprises. The same governments pioneered in health and welfare schemes. Research on these subjects might deflate current public debate, but it would at least introduce fact into the discussion.

When one moves from political culture and particular institutions to parties and electoral behaviour one is struck by the increase in scholarly analysis. This, perhaps, is to be expected since the prairies have spawned a number of parties over the years and have maintained structures as well to support the two old parties. One of the difficulties of talking about parties in the prairies is that not all groups which act like parties consider themselves parties. Indeed, the number of non-party or even anti-party phenomena are such that special consideration needs to be given them and will follow these comments on research in electoral behaviour and formal party structures.

Prior to the 1960s analysis of voting patterns, elections and party fortunes rested generally with writers in the *Canadian Forum*, *Saturday Night*, and *Maclean's Magazine*. Some comment might also be found in *The Round Table* in earlier periods while the *Financial Post* has consistently paid some attention to these subjects. Most of this material was far from satisfactory from a political scientist's view point; for example, the *Forum* and *Saturday Night* predictably expressed enthusiasm or gloom in their respective columns on the electoral fortunes of the C.C.F.[44] Also these publications showed a noticeable lack of interest in the political developments of Alberta. A cursory review of *The Canadian Periodical Index* from 1938 through 1960 shows 49 articles listed for Saskatchewan under the general headings of politics, government, elections and legislative assembly, 48 articles for Manitoba under similar headings and only 24 for Alberta.

The study of electoral behaviour in recent elections seems to be concentrated in Saskatchewan. Analyses of the shifts in party support in the provincial elections of 1964 and 1967 may be found in several articles,[45] while comparison of Saskatchewan voting behaviour in federal and provincial elections in the sixties has similarly elicited scholarly comment.[46] It should be noted that interest in federal-provincial voting patterns is by no means limited to the prairies; indeed the contrast in electoral choice over time between the two levels of government has given rise to a general theory that effective opposition to the federal government in Canada occurs in the provinces.[47] Studies based on prairie constituencies are relatively rare, but two have appeared in recent years: one concerns Saskatoon and attempts to relate questionnaire response, voter turnout, and party support, while another describes the 1962 federal election in Winnipeg North Centre.[48] Individual provincial elections have received little attention and, again, those that have, have been in Saskatchewan. The ethnic and religious turmoil fanned by the Ku Klux Klan in the election of 1929 is described by Patrick Kyba in "Ballots and Burning Crosses—The Election of 1929" in Ward and Spafford's *Politics in Saskatchewan*.[49] A complimentary article by Andrew Milnor, "The New Politics and the Ethnic Revolt: 1929-1938" in the same volume notes the effects of the depression and drought on the temporary voter alignment of 1929.[50] The elections of the thirties saw a readjustment of electoral support in these years as the Saskatchewan Liberals were returned to power and the legislative opposition was monopolized by the C.C.F. The only other provincial election to receive concentrated study is Saskatchewan's first, in 1905. In an article in *Saskatchewan History*, D. H. Bocking depicts the causes and consequences of the introduction of party government in an area previously free of territorial partisanism.[51]

The electorate itself has remained relatively free from analysis. What comment does exist has naturally concentrated on the farmer and has usually been satisfied with painting him red for radical or blue for conservative without much concern for shading. As a consequence he has been labelled a rugged individualist, a free enterpriser and a collectivist, among other things. The most recent and complete study of the subject is by Evelyn Eager in which she discusses the Saskatchewan electorate's tradition of avoiding political extremes.[52] It would seem that the goal of electoral success has encouraged that province's parties to value compromise and, at the same time, the experience of the western electorate has stimulated a pragmatic rather than doctrinaire approach to problem-solving.

Studies of particular provincial parties do not appear until the fifties. But they are preceded by one article which is referred to frequently in discussions of Saskatchewan politics and which remains the sole published research on the Saskatchewan Liberal Party. That article by Escott M. Reid, entitled "The Saskatchewan Liberal Party Machine Before 1929," originally appeared in *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* in 1936.[53] It is no exaggeration to say that this particular article contributed greatly to perpetuating the reputation of the "Liberal Machine." It is curious that the Saskatchewan Liberal Party has received so little attention in the last three decades since it continues to be the most successful of the old parties on the prairies. Saskatchewan's other major party, the New Democratic Party, has suffered no similar fate. Particularly in its early years as the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation it was the subject of numerous investigations. The best known is Seymour M. Lipset's study *Agrarian Socialism*.[54] Brimming with data, this book reveals that the C.C.F.'s initial support did not come from Saskatchewan's most depressed farmers; that a socialist party as it approaches power must compromise its ideology; and that despite its populist image the C.C.F. depends or depended greatly on its leadership. This is not the place to evaluate these findings or others, but it may be germane to note that the role of the civil service in Saskatchewan government, to which Lipset devoted considerable attention in the forties, is still a live question today.[55] Another study, although of article length, of the C.C.F. in power which reveals that party's approaches to government planning is T. A. Rausch's "The Political Thought of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation."[56]

In the last year, the study of political parties in Saskatchewan has been brightened by the appearance of two articles in *Saskatchewan History* on the Progressive Party: "The Decline of the Progressive Party in Saskatchewan, 1925-1932" by William Calderwood, and "C. A. Dunning and the Challenge of the Progressives, 1922-1925" by William Brennan.[57] The first examines the collaboration of Progressives and Conservatives in the late twenties and the influence of the Ku Klux Klan on this development, while the second chronicles the difficulties that the Liberal Premier faced in the hectic political climate of the period. The latter article suggests the importance of the personality of the Premier, not the "machine", in warding off the threat of the Progressives. It was the decision of the farmers of Saskatchewan to enter politics directly that killed the fortunes of the Progressives. The import of this decision was forecast as early as 1931 in an article in *The Fortnightly Review* where the writer suggested that the collapse of the pools had released the "energies and brains of the ablest agrarian leaders."[58] As a result it seemed inevitable that the politics of Saskatchewan would dramatically alter.

In commenting on the Progressive movement one work which must receive attention is W. L. Morton's *The Progressive Party in Canada*.[59] The book stands out as unique for it deals with a party at both levels of the federal system. No other study of a party attempts to do this. In this work as well as in some of Morton's earlier pieces the causes of the disrespect for partyism are described and the fate of the revolt recorded. In his review of *The Progressive Party in Canada*, Eugene Forsey describes that party's history as "the record of two ideas warring in the bosom of a single group."[60] The tension between American populism and Canadian parliamentary traditions is deftly analyzed by W. L. Morton.

The story of the disintegration of the Progressive Party rests in the actions of its Alberta adherents animated by Henry Wise Wood and his theory of group government. Wood stands out as the individual who did more than anyone else to structure Alberta politics and to separate and distinguish it from the rest of Canada. Perhaps in recognition of this Wood is one of the few prairie political figures to have a book written about him, *Henry Wise Wood of Alberta*, by William Kirby Rolph.[61] The author concentrates on Wood's achievement in bringing the U.F.A. successfully into provincial politics, his struggle for the group theory of goverment against Crerar and other Manitoba Progressives and his contribution to the success of the Wheat Pool and the Central Selling Agency.

One of the clearest expositions of the theory of group government is presented by C. B. Macpherson in his study of the Social Credit, *Democracy in Alberta*.[62] The first edition was subtitled "The Theory and Practice of a Quasi-Party System"; this has been changed in the second edition to read "Social Credit and the Party System." Both subtitles, however, indicate the concern of the author to explain Alberta's history of single party prominence. Macpherson develops a class interest thesis based on a *petit-bourgeois* economy in a quasi-colonial territory. He suggests that out of this situation a quasi-party system arises as "a middle way between an alternate-party system . . . and a non-party system."[63] Whether or not one accepts the author's thesis, *Democracy in Alberta* remains one of the most provocative studies of prairie politics. Evidence for this statement rests on the informative exchange of ideas between Seymour Lipset and Macpherson which appeared in *The Canadian Forum* in 1954 and 1955.[64] Lipset's suggestion about the difficulty of operating British parliamentary institutions in a North American federal system and the effect that this undertaking has upon political parties demands the scrutiny of prairie political observers.

The one subject of prairie political concern on which there is a considerable volume of material is the nature of Social Credit and its early legislative programme. What interests many writers is that Social Credit is not a party like the others. From the very first it has been interpreted as something more or something different. Explanations for its rise have focused on the social upheaval caused by the depression and drought and upon the presence of a leader of considerable personal magnetism. Shortly after the election of 1935 *The Round Table* traced the electoral revolt to "a tired and disullusioned democracy without traditional leadership."[65] A similar explanation is given by C. S. Burchill in his analogy between Western discontent in the 1930s and colonial revolt in the 1770s. Traditional leaders, he says, were pushed aside by teachers and nonconformist clergymen, and he quotes Governor Sewall's "testy" remark: "Mr. Cushing I know and Mr. Hancock I know, but where the devil this brace of Adamses came from I know not."[66] A more recent comparison has been made by S. D. Clark between the Aberhart sweep of 1935 and the Diefenbaker sweep of 1958.[67] The work which best communicates the atmosphere of the time is John A. Irving's *The Social Credit Movement in Alberta.* The spirit of the movement and the disintegration of accepted political values are captured in his chronicle: "'The response of the people."[68]

The legislation of the period — the reduction of interest, the taxation of banks, the "press bill" — and the disallowances and reservations are dealt with in a number of scholarly pieces. The most complete accounts are in James Mallory's *Social Credit and the Federal Power in Canada* and several articles in the *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science.*[69] A little quoted, but articulate defence of the Press Bill is to be found in an issue of *Acta Victoriana.*[70]

The above paragraphs by no means exhaust the literature on Social Credit, but they do give some idea of the volume of research. By contrast the other parties of Alberta, that is, the Liberal and Conservative parties, have been studied sparingly. Only Lewis G. Thomas's *The Liberal Party in Alberta* deals with the traditional parties.[71] The downfall of the Liberals, subject as they were to internal dissensions, was promoted by the federal schism of 1917 and the post-war disillusionment of the farmers. The contrast between the fate of the provincial Liberals of Alberta and Saskatchewan is striking and has been considered recently within the larger scheme of a comparison of general party structures of the two provinces.[72]

On the prairies it is no great leap from party to non-party politics. Indeed, it is not easy to determine where one leaves off and the other begins. Much of the literature on Social Credit, as already noted, suggests some ambivalence as to its being a party or a movement. The story of non-partisanism in the West has been told many times, but all of the stories repeat the sentiment expressed by F. W. G. Haultain on the eve of Saskatchewan and Alberta's autonomy: "To me the welfare and interests of this great western country are more, and always have been more important than the success or convenience of any political party."[73]

The primary focus of non-party politics has been the farmers' movements. True, in both Alberta and Manitoba, they did eventually enter provincial politics and destroy the traditional party system. But much of their early activity centred on combating the evils, real or imagined, of the party system from outside. The story has been told broadly in many of W. L. Morton's works and in summary form by Paul F. Sharp in *The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada.*[74] This latter work, as do many of the other writings on this subject, stresses the similarities between the Canadian and American agrarian experiences. Almost none of the literature points to contrasts in these experiences. And yet there are contrasts, the most obvious being the growth of socialism in western Canada. Explanation for this divergence may lie in the strength of industrial unionism in Winnipeg. For this reason D. C. Masters' study of *The Winnipeg General Strike* is an important contribution to an understanding of prairie politics.[75] The influence of non-conformist religion and the social gospel in rural as well as urban areas also cannot be ignored. Another possible explanation may rest in prairie rhetoric. Many reform movements were condemned at one time or another as proponents of "degenerate republicanism."[76] It may be that such labelling has misled interpreters of prairie politics into seeing Americanization where none or at least only some exists. In the current inquest on Canadian identity, the prairies have been singled out as one of Canada's least American regions.[77] The paradox which appears to exist between theory and fact needs to be explained.

There have been many histories of the farmers' movements, but one of the first and certainly most entertaining is Hopkins Moorhouse's *Deep Furrows* in which the author provides personality sketches of early farm leaders and recounts the history of agrarian movements, often indulging in picturesque language: "To farm was an occupation easily parsed—subjunctive mood, past tense and passive voice! The farmer was third person, singular!"[78] The growth of agrarian co-operation leading to the period of the pools is described by Harold S. Patton in *Grain Growers' Co-operation in Western Canada.*[79] A less favourable evaluation of the pools is provided by W. A. Mackintosh in *Agricultural Co-operation in Western Canada.*[80] A related but more recent study of the same topic is to be found in D. A. MacGibbon's *The Canadian Grain Trade*, 1931-1951.[81]

The relationship between the farmer and politics is discussed in an interesting article by J. S. Woodsworth (presumably it is Woodsworth, although the author is listed as J. S. Woodward) published in 1931.[82] Woodsworth traces the ability of Saskatchewan farm leaders in the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section) to the requirement that individuals hold only one office in the Pool, the U.F.C. (S.S.) or the Legislature. This prohibition on overlapping offices did not exist in earlier days when the political leaders and farm leaders (of the S.G.G.A.) frequently were the same persons. Concentration on the Grain Growers' Association and the U.F.C. (S.S.) in discussions about farmers and politics has been redressed recently by two articles in *Saskatchewan History* by D. S. Spafford on the Farmers' Union of Canada and "Independent" politics in Saskatchewan before the Non-Partisan League.[83]

Additional published material on non-party politics is related to the creation in Saskatchewan of various organizations, aside from the Grain Growers, to serve the farmers' interests. The establishment of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company in 1911 has received scholarly treatment by D. S. Spafford, while the founding of the Saskatchewan Purchasing Company in 1910 has been examined by John Archer.[84] The latter venture ended in failure because, according to one participant, the western farmer was "incapable of acting disinterestedly . . . [and was]

utterly dead to the true co-operative spirit."[85] Nonetheless, the author suggests that the experience of this company influenced later co-operative legislation in the province. An account of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association reveals that early in its history (1914) the provincial government recognized such voluntary associations as pressure groups and suggested that they organize effectively to influence government.[86]

Another non-party organization that has been written about is the Ku Klux Klan. As noted above, Patrick Kyba considers the Klan in relation to the 1929 election. The only other account of its activity appeared in the *Queen's Quarterly* in 1928, where the Klan was compared to the Non-Partisan League in that both of them initially appeared as fraternal societies and gradually became involved in politics.[87] The Klan of course, never ran candidates for election as did the N.P.L.

One final but recent episode in the history of non-party politics is Saskatchewan's medical care crisis of 1962. While the subject itself was definitely political, being part of a party's programme, it eventually stimulated non-party organizations to act. The story of the crisis is told by Edwin A. Tollefson in *Bitter Medicine: The Saskatchewan Medicare Feud* and in a more recent analysis, "The Medicare Dispute," in Ward and Spafford's *Politics in Saskatchewan*.[88] While much has been written about this particular event, Tollefson's accounts, in this writer's opinion, are by far the most thorough and balanced appraisals.

Before closing this survey of political research in the prairies two other general subjects should be considered, for scholarship in these areas, while far from bountiful, is rich in analysis. The first topic is federal-provincial relations and the second is political biography.

Federalism extends the range of potential political activity. It introduces an additional dimension to the political system by providing two levels of government instead of one and by establishing between these two levels a series of countervailing pressures. The conflict between centralizing and decentralizing forces is resolved, to a large extent, through the operation of the party system. The prairies and Quebec have exploited this potential of federalism more than other regions; for this reason a challenging article by Michael Pinard on third parties, while it concentrates primarily on Quebec, has suggestive implications for prairie party structures.[89] It is Pinard's thesis that when the electorate tires of a major party after a long tenure, it will seek to express its disenchantment through a new third party rather than through the traditional second major party. The relationship between federal and provincial party structures has long been a subject of comment in Canada. One of the most pertinent studies for the prairies is by Denis Smith in the second edition of Hugh Thorburn's *Party Politics in Canada*.[90] It was the dream of the Progressives, of John W. Dafoe, and of others, to separate these structures. This is not the place to discuss the wisdom of this proposal, but it does seem appropriate that the proposal should be evaluated. It may or may not be relevant to Canadian politics today, but its origins and bases of support need to be investigated to further the study of western politics.

Western attitudes on constitutional questions have similarly gone unstudied. An exception to this generalization reveals the wealth of material awaiting the researcher. Barry Strayer's survey of Saskatchewan's views on constitutional amendment contributes to an understanding of the West's role in Confederation.[91] Few other scholars have done the same. Thirty years ago the Attorney-General for Saskatchewan asked if it was "not worthwhile to test the desire for [national] unity by a practice of unity."[92] In another era, when decentralization again seems to be the trend of Canadian federalism, the role of the prairie provinces needs to be examined. It surely does great harm to unity when the West is depicted as disillusioned with federal language, trade and social security policies. Despite her bad publicity, the West is not obstructionist. Large-scale interpretive studies of the prairies' place in Confederation are needed. What Vernon Fowke did in his *Canadian Agricultural Policy: The Historical Pattern* and in *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy* needs to be done now in political research.[93]

The final general topic that should be mentioned is political biography. Fruitful research is at last being accomplished in the field federally, but it is still meagre in the provinces. As mentioned earlier, only Henry Wise Wood has had a book devoted to him. Social Credit's leaders have generally gone unstudied; Manning, totally, save for some journalists' observations; and Aberhart, partially, having received some attention from Harold Schultz and John Irving.[94] Published research on Saskatchewan and Manitoba premiers is even less substantial. Except for two studies of Walter Scott in pre-provincial days and a non-academic treatment of T. C. Douglas,[95] the remaining prairie premiers and their stories are confined to unpublished theses or to archives.

Biographies of politicians of non-premier status do less well, if possible: W. R. Motherwell is dealt with briefly in the provincial period in *Saskatchewan History*.[96] The life of J. S. Woodsworth has received two treatments, the more scholarly study being Kenneth McNaught's *A Prophet in Politics* in which an informative account of the birth of the C.C.F. is presented.[97] Its value rests not so much in what it reveals about the prairies, as in its suggestion of influences at work upon that region in the thirties.

The remaining political biography provides some of the most intriguing data available in prairie politics. Studies of prairie newsmen, Dafoe of the *Free Press*, Turner of *Turner's Weekly*, and Oliver of *The Bulletin*, provide important information to the student of the West.[98] Two other studies, this time of farm leaders, again suggest further untapped wealth awaiting the researcher: Ralph Hedlin's study of Edmund A. Partridge in *The Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba*[99] and Harold Innis' edited diary of Alexander McPhail.[100] After reading these biographical pieces one can only wonder at the absence of comparable studies of William Irvine, Aaron Sapiro and C. C. Williams, to name only three obvious candidates for biographical research. Another conclusion that is suggested by this brief survey of political biography is the need to re-examine the thesis that "frontiers may often supply grievances for political movements. Urban centres as often supply the intellectual leadership."[101] Political leaders on the prairies obviously owed a debt to metropolitan influences, particularly those of Winnipeg; but urban centres were equally subject to the sway of political figures from the hinterland.

This survey of political research on the prairies has considered that region's political culture, institutions, parties, its federal-provincial relations and the biographies of its political leaders. While the quantity of literature may seem to negate the earlier claim that material is scarce, yet primary research in most of these areas is rare. Political parties perhaps have been studied most, indeed they have received more attention here than elsewhere in Canada. But, until equivalent research is undertaken and published on the culture and institutions of the region, there can be no full appreciation or understanding of prairie politics.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Arthur S. Morton and Chester Martin, *History of Prairie Settlement and Dominion Lands Policy* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. II), Toronto, 1938.

[2] W. A. MacKintosh, A. B. Clark and G. A. Elliott, *Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. IV), Toronto, 1935, p. 87.

[3] R. W. Murchie, William Allen and J. F. Booth, *Agricultural Progress on the Prairie Frontier* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. V, Toronto, 1936.

[4] C. A. Dawson and Eva R. Younge, *Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces: The Social Side of the Settlement Process* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. VIII), Toronto, 1940.

[5] James A. Munger, *Housing and Environmental Conditions in the Prairie Provinces*, Centre for Community Studies, Saskatoon, 1966, Part III.

[6] Jean Brunet, *Next-Year Country: A Study of Rural Social Organization in Alberta*, Toronto, 1951; W. E. Mann, *Sect, Cult, and Church*, Toronto, 1955. Of related interest for Saskatchewan, see Donald E. Willmott, *Organizations and Social Life of Farm Families in a Prairie Municipality*, Center for Community Studies, Saskatoon, 1964, and Richard Laskin, *Leadership of Voluntary Organizations in a Saskatchewan Town*, Center for Community Studies, Saskatoon, 1962.

[7] Robert England, *The Central European Immigrant in Canada*, Toronto, 1929; see also the same author's *The Colonization of Western Canada; A Study of Contemporary Land Settlement (1896-1934)*, London, 1936.

[8] Walter Murray, "Continental Europeans in Western Canada", *Queen's Quarterly*, No. 1, (Winter, 1931).

[9] For example, see *The Round Table*, Vol. XII, (June, 1932) where the writer attributes the demand for financial relief in Alberta, the least hard hit of prairie provinces by depression, to "the fact that there is a much larger percentage of foreigners there." By contrast he notes the settlers of Anglo-Saxon origin in South-

ern Saskatchewan, the most affected area, who remain "sound and well-balanced even in their troubles," p. 626.

[10] C. A. Dawson, *Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada* (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, Vol. VII), Toronto, 1936.

[11] Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples*, New Haven, 1940.

[12] Paul Yuzyk, *The Ukrainians in Manitoba: A Social History*, Toronto, 1953, p. 182.

[13] Keith A. McLeod, "Politics, Schools and the French Language, 1881-1931," *Politics in Saskatchewan*, ed. by Norman Ward and Duff Spafford, Toronto, 1968 (hereafter cited as *Ward and Spafford*).

[14] Stephen Leacock, "Social and Other Credit in Alberta," *The Fortnightly Review*, No. 140 (November, 1936), p. 526.

[15] G. V. Ferguson, "An Alberta Prophet — 1935 Model," *The Canadian Forum*, Vol. XV (April, 1935), 247-48.

[16] Rev. Edmund H. Oliver, "The Institutionalizing of the Prairies," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Series III, Volume XXIV, Section II (May, 1930).

[17] For example, see G. E. Britnell, *The Wheat Economy*, Toronto, 1939; "The Depression in Rural Saskatchewan," *The Canadian Economy and Its Problems*, ed. by H. A. Innis and A. F. W. Plumptre, Toronto, 1934; and Saskatchewan, 1930-1935," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, Vol. II* (May, 1936), pp. 143-66.

[18] Alma Lawton, "Relief Administration in Saskatoon During the Depression," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXII (Spring, 1969); Blair Neatby, "The Saskatchewan Relief Commission, 1931-1934," *Saskatchewan History*, in Vol. III (Spring, 1950). For an earlier account of a relief project in the form of a "back-to-the-land" movement, see England, *The Colonization of Western Canada*, p. 126.

[19] *Manitoba's Case: A Submission Presented to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations by the Government of the Province of Manitoba*, Winnipeg, 1937, Part VIII; *The Case for Alberta: Alberta's Problems and Dominion-Provincial Relations*, Edmonton, 1938, Part I, Chap. XII; *A Submission by the Government of Saskatchewan to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations*, Regina, 1937, Part VIII.

[20] C. S. Burchill, "An Historical Parallel," *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. LXIV (Winter, 1937).

[21] This theme is developed by J. R. Mallory, *Social Credit and the Federal Power in Canada*, Toronto, 1954, and by V. C. Fowke, "The National Policy—Old and New," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. XVIII (August, 1952).

[22] On the subject of secession, see J. V. Parker, "The Case for Western Secession," *The Canadian Forum*, Vol. XVI (December, 1936) and *Canadian Annual Review* (1930-1931), 259, On prairie unification, see the *Submission to the Rowell Royal Commission Investigating Dominion-Provincial Relations* by Young Men's Section, Calgary Board of Trade.

[23] "The Agrarian Movement in Canada," *The Quarterly Review, Vol. CCXXV* (1921).

[24] W. L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, 2nd ed., Toronto, 1967; "The Bias of Frairie Politics," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Series III, Volume XLXI* Section II (June, 1955); "A Century of Plain and Parkland," *Alberta Historical Review*, Vol. XVII (Spring, 1969), and reprinted below in a slightly extended form.

[25] Robert W. Sloan, "The Canadian West: Americanization or Canadianization," *Alberta Historical Review*, Vol. XVI (Winter, 1968). An earlier but similar discussion may be found in Paul F. Sharp, "The American Farmer and the Last Best West," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. I (January, 1948).

[26] See J. Murray Beck, *The Government of Nova Scotia*, Toronto, 1957. Professor Beck suggests that the operation of responsible, efficient government is not impossible on occasion even in small communities.

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7

SOCIOLOGY AND THE CANADIAN PLAINS

M. L. LAUTT

REGIONALISM—PRO AND CON.

In any review of sociological development in the prairies, the primary problem becomes the settlement of the question of regionalism. The regional divisions of Canada are probably its most obvious characteristic, and one commonly agreed upon by the general populace. Ironically, however, in the academic world, we still face two controversies:

a) whether or not the area of regional sociology has scientific adequacy, and
b) whether or not the concept of region in its specific sense really applies to the western Canadian plains.

A socio-cultural region is commonly understood to be a geographical area whose population has been and continues to be exposed to similar geographical factors, similar historical circumstances and problems, with the result that the people in the area develop some degree of similarity in life-styles and therefore, by implication, will act in terms of regional interests and have a regional identity. The specific boundaries of any one "region" might be a matter of dispute but similarities in consumer patterns, political behavior, dress and speech in an area suggest the concept of region. Regional differences have always been recognized and noted by novelists, tourists, journalists, and federal government administrators whose job it is to apply national rules to different areas of a country. A phenomenon independently observed by so many different people has been considered worthy of scientific investigation, yet it also has had its critics.

However, as Zimmerman and DuWors have pointed out, the more common criticisms rest on varying degrees of confusion. For instance, it has been argued that the differences among the people in a region are greater in number than the similarities, but the number of differences is of little or no relevance providing the similarities can be used to explain behavior and beliefs.

It has also been argued that the terms region and regionalism imply an influence which exists beyond and even independently from the people who inhabit the area. If true, this would be the common fallacy of reifying the group. The concept, "regionalism," however, is meant to describe with

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some precision certain conditions of behavior in a particular area, and not some entity independent of the population.

A similar criticism is that the concept of regional personality is as invalid as the concept of national character applied to a large society. But regional personality does not refer to the personality of the region itself (another problem of reification), but to segments or clusters of traits which can be shown statistically to have a higher incidence in the region than in the population at large, which are diffused through the region, and are conditioned on residence in the region.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that the mass media have destroyed regional cultural differences, and have standardized information so that "region" can only be used in a geographical or economic sense. The process of increasing similarities however, does not necessarily decrease differences, and it is likely that only those characteristics which are not an inherent part of a regional culture will become uniform throughout the country. Mass communication and efficient transportation may well increase homogeneity between previously distinct regions. For cross-national studies, it is realistic to see the processes of industrialization and modernization as region-standardizing processes in Canada and elsewhere, but regional variations (even the effects of these processes) within national boundaries still affect the way of life of the Canadian people. The concept of region and regionalism will exist as long as region-linked interests remain.

Finally, critics of the concept of region have argued that, in the final analysis, the term region implies geographical determinism, which is not accepted in Sociology as a valid single explanation for social phenomena. Of course, the region is usually a geographically-based area, and consequently, many of the early studies in regional sociology concerned the mechanical analysis of the geographic distribution of people and their cultures with a corresponding search for strong correlations between such factors as rainfall, topography, temperature, soil, and elevation, and the structure of the community concerned. History is full of instances which demonstrate the explanatory uselessness of such an approach: there are many instances in which many different types of human groupings have existed under the same geographic conditions. People are bound to geography only to the extent that they lack ingenuity and creativity. In Sociology today, the geographical environment is considered to be only one element in a multi-causal framework explaining the development and perpetuation of a socio-cultural region.

In summary, it appears that the major criticisms of regional Sociology are based on methodological confusion and/or a misunderstanding of the limits of the approach. The regional approach is not so much a theory as it is simply a perspective (with empirical referents) which attempts to aid in the development of adequate sociological theory.

If the regional concept still has some scientific potential in Sociology, does it apply to the Canadian plains? The man most well-known in western Sociology for taking a regional approach to the Prairies is B. Y. Card. His early attempt in 1960 to view the prairies within the context of regional Sociology did not wrestle with the validity of the regional concept, but simply assumed it.[2] A later book detailing the proceedings of a sociological-anthropological conference on regionalism,[3] demonstrates little progress in establishing empirically the applicability of regional sociology to the western Canadian plains.

However, other papers in this collection strongly suggest that the Prairies meet at least certain qualifications sociologists would require of a region—a common geography, a common history, common problems, and even elements of a literary tradition. A common geography is perhaps the least equivocal of these requirements. Broadly speaking, the region has shared a common history, but there are many differences in provincial development, and it remains a matter of empirical demonstration whether the differentiating or homogenizing influences are stronger. The region as a whole does share many problems which might promote a socio-cultural unity. A seasonally controlled economy based on staple and material resource exports, combined with a subordinate position as a politico-economic hinterland in which the ethnic-linguistic balance is the reverse of that prevailing in central Canada, has generated a series of common problems from freight rates and industrial diversification to language. The question remains however, as to whether the sharing of common problems *necessarily* produces affiliation, unity, and a common identity. The mere sharing of common problems may in some cases result in severe conflict over differential access to specific solutions; and whether in that circumstance common problems produce a common socio-cultural effect may at least be doubted and is a matter for empirical study. Taking these factors into account, one could speculate that Manitoba and Saskatchewan form more of a distinct socio-cultural region than all three prairie provinces together, and that Alberta might have more in common with British Columbia.[4]

While sociologists have done little to explore the above issues in regional identification, some work has been done on the question of regional solidarity: i.e. whether the structure of the region facilitates the movement of the prairie population more freely within the prairies than between the prairies and other regions. A recent study has found that there are greater differences in occupational composition between the three prairie provinces than between various regions,[5] but another has noted that there are more similarities between certain metropolitan areas within the prairies than there are between metropolitan areas and urban centres of similar size in other regions.[6] A third study buttresses the second conclusion by showing that prairie centres exhibit a distinctiveness compared to other cities in terms of the industrial and urban composition of the population.[7] In Edmonton and Calgary in particular, the population is generally younger, better educated and better placed in the occupational structure than the populations of most metropolitan areas, and the metropolitan areas in the prairies in general do not exhibit the diversity found in eastern cities such as Toronto and Montreal, but rather are more specialized. The urban similarities within the prairie area might well be explained with specific reference to the similarities in historical development, age and geographical location of the cities or these factors might be viewed as part of some regional influence which has guided the cities along certain similar growth patterns to "insure" that people within the region can and do easily move from one city to another. The subject clearly requires much more study.

No significant study has been done on the second aspect of regional solidarity, mobility between the Prairies and other regions. It has been noted that of 7.2 million settlers arriving in Canada between 1851 and 1951 (many of whom went to the prairies) 6.5 million left the country again.[8] Although these figures are national they could suggest a lack of internal magnetism which a region is supposed to have. On the other hand, migration may only signify a selective process which consolidates a regional character, and without more precise studies of the motivation of the groups from which migration arises, no definitive conclusions can be drawn. Except in the case of Quebec, socio-cultural differences which exist between the prairies and other areas of Canada should be of little or no consequence when geographical mobility involves movement from urban to urban area or rural to rural area across Canada.

Sociologists tend to consider regions as natural behavioral groupings exhibiting a variety of shared reasons for their existence, marked by adaptability, flexibility, some degree of independence and self-sufficiency, characterized by an organic solidarity, and having such features as a particular dialect, group songs and symbols, common heroes, and an acceptable myth about the origin of the area. Earlier in its history, the prairie west may have qualified as a region in these terms, but today it is more dependent and inflexible. Any minor change in the Canadian scene, especially economically, is reflected almost immediately and directly in prairie life. The spread of formal education as a provincial responsibility has assisted in developing historical insight into the many differences in the development and present-day characteristics of each of the three provinces.[9] Each province has its provincial borders and jealousies, and its strongly waved provincial "flags" (both practically and symbolically). The plains area in total does not really qualify as a natural group by accepted standards.

Nevertheless, some, principally prairie historians, have argued that the prairie experience has given rise to beliefs, attitudes, etc. which could be labelled "the Prairie Personality". The historian, G. F. G. Stanley, for instance, voices the belief of many people when he states that "history and environment have produced a distinct species of the genus homo sapiens in Western Canada. . . ."[10] The plains of Canada, as the last frontier, is generally thought to have produced a people who exhibit pragmatism (from the harsh realities of rural life), individualism (economic and otherwise), optimism, devotion to hard work, courage in the face of a challenge, and a confidence in the existence of the principle of equality of opportunity.

When the first white settlers came to the prairies, they probably already exhibited most of the above characteristics, or they would not have come in the first place. For a short period of time, during the opening of the Canadian West, events and the prairie environment likely reinforced these personality traits and attitudes, and people lacking this personality cluster moved on. However, with the advent of extensive transportation networks, the forging of more elaborate economic ties with the East, and the surge of modernization and urbanization on the prairie scene, the concept of a distinct regional personality would seem to have become less and less viable. Today at least some empirical study indicates that, at least with regard to national issues, people in the prairies demonstrate no particular distinctiveness in basic attitudes or beliefs from the rest of English-speaking Canada. Variation occurs only in the local interpretation of a problem to apply it to the Prairie scene, and even then, adjustments are made on a provincial rather than a regional basis.

The latter day development of a "regional personality" in the plains area, has undoubtedly been impeded by the settlement of large numbers of goups of different ethnic origins. The socio-political experimentation and fluctuations which have taken place in the West in the last twenty-five years may or may not suggest that the different cultural groups have no common regional personality, but it may be more reasonable to suggest that Anglo-Canadians in the prairies have more in common with people of Anglo-Saxon descent in other areas of Canada, than they do with non-Anglo-Canadians in the Prairies.

Finally, the notion of applying the concept of regional personality to the Canadian prairies, and even the specific personality characteristics which are commonly cited, resembles the American interpretation of their plains people.[12] It is important to take note of one major attitudinal difference between the two countries which suggests that it would be wrong to assume, as sociologists like Lipset and McKenzie have done, that the Canadian plains had a regional personality simply because the American plains may have expressed one.[13] In the U.S. a positive value was placed on the standardization of an American personality, so that if regional influences did exist, they would be affecting a homogeneous group of people, resulting in a different, but still homogeneous group. It is logically possible to evolve regional personalities in this situation. On the other hand, in Canada, and not least in the West, some stress has always been laid on differentiation and its maintenance. Hence even with strong regional influences in the Canadian plains the effect on the different cultural groups could logically be, rather than a regional personality, a number of changed, but still heterogeneous, groups of people. Again, the close empirical study needed to show whether this has in fact been so remains to be done.

Despite the theoretical problems confronting the application of the concept of regional personality of the prairie west, the literature of and about the West abounds with expressions of regional identity—feelings, interests, actions definitions which are considered to reflect some basic image of the region and its characteristics with which the residents identify. Stanley writes: "the Spirit of Independence. That was what the prairies meant to the native peoples of these western provinces: that was what the Prairies were to mean to the newcomers who settled the plains during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries."[14] In the early West, there undoubtedly was a strong regional identity, but it was not restricted to the present-day prairie provinces. Rather, it included any unsettled area west of the metropolitan centers of Montreal and Toronto, and east of Vancouver. Settlers (fur trappers, traders, and farmers) identified with the vast virgin land, wilderness and wildness, untapped resources, and the challenge of the topography and climate. The social-psychological process of regional identity played an important role in the opening of the Canadian West by attracting people with the necessary characteristics to build a civilization out of undeveloped materials. Although there is a need to verify this empirically, there seems, today, to be a hold-over of this same picture of the West, forming the basis for a diffuse regional identity in the Prairies. Many prairie people still consciously identify with a picture which may be very unrealistic in today's terms. Fortunately, there seems to be an awareness on their part that this portrait exists only in history.

There are two possible explanations for this phenomenon: either (a) an image of a prairie identity has not yet crystallized to provide a more adequate sense of self than the now irrelevant "Western Frontier" image or (b) a new, up-to-date image of the prairies as a region has evolved, but it is negative and psychologically unacceptable. (Prairie people have at times been portrayed by the mass media as underdogs, economically dependent, more "Americanized" than any other area in Canada, culturally and linguistically bigoted, and so on.) As a consequence, prairie people identify with an unrealistic, but generally positive picture of the prairie "region".

The search for some regional image or identity is an active one today, as witness the convening of a conference entitled *One Prairie Province?* in Lethbridge in 1970.[15] However, the meeting was not motivated by the average prairie dweller concerned that his old regional identity be replaced with something more modern. On the contrary, it was instituted and supported and contributed to by a select group of politically and/or academically involved people. The political motivation is clear. From the provincial point of view, three provinces united would have more influence on the national level, and therefore could demand more provincial autonomy. From the viewpoint of the national government, a united "Prairie Province" would mean having to interact with only one central provincial government, and a single political force, rather than with three diverse governments and possibly three political parties. The interest shown by the academic world, on the other hand, reflected some attempt on its part, to keep its finger on "the pulse of the nation" (in this case, the revitalization of regionalism). The Lethbridge Conference may suggest that where there is smoke, there is fire, but it adds little to any empirical demonstration of the existence of a prairie regional identity at large.

Certainly the conference is now part of Canadian history, and the contributed papers will be discussed in future years, but the significance of the event is questionable. The people attending and contributing did not represent prairie opinion in general; and although the opinions ranged from strong emotional commitments to the three provinces as one unified region, through a discussion of the Canadian West in terms of a tug-of-war between nationalism and regionalism, to the opinion that regionalism was not a viable concept as applied to the three prairie provinces, none, save possibly the economic papers, had any empirical referents.[16]

The regional approach then, may have some scientific usefulness but sociology has not even started to tackle the problem of regional sociology in the West, even though the assumption is often made that regionalism as a concept can be validly applied to the Canadian prairies. Until this question of the validity of this assumption is considered worthy of an empirical answer, any contribution that Sociology makes to the study of the Western "region" may not reflect social realities. Despite their general failure to pursue both the problem and the substance of a regional Sociology, sociologists have undertaken a significant number of studies which open windows upon important facets of prairie society—notably in the area of rural-urban studies, ethnic groups and native peoples.

RURAL-URBAN STUDIES

Not surprisingly, given the geography and the preponderance of agriculture in the prairies, a number of studies have been undertaken on rural-urban topics.[17] Many historical works deal specifically with the pioneer era in the prairies,[18] while later studies attempted to draw over-all pictures of rural life.[19] The most recent research, however, attempts to portray, and in some cases, find solutions for, the problems occuring in rural life as a result of the "insatiable" processes of modernization and urbanization.

Changes in the general Canadian economy, developments in agricultural technology and refinements in the business of farming, and the magnetic pull of the cities, have produced dramatic shifts in population distribution in the prairies.

> Following the relatively depressed 1931-41 decade, which was particularly severe in the Prairies, the advance of Prairie urbanization accelerated very sharply, and in the 1951-61 decade, continued to climb rapidly. Over the whole 25 year period from 1941 to 1966 the level of Prairie urbanization advanced from 32 percentage points to 63 percentage points in contrast with an increase of just four percentage points in the 30 years from 1911 to 1941. Urbanization in each Prairie Province increased by at least 22 percentage points between 1941 and 1966, Alberta leading with an increase of 37.[20]

Accompanying such dramatic reorganization of the social structure of large segments of the population were the familiar social problems of unemployment, poverty, and social-psychological disorientation. The federal government (in its role as guardian of the Canadian people, and distributor of regional resources) decided that informed action must be taken to deal with the problems of rural rehabilitation.[21] Academicians, noting a "field" ripe for research harvesting, made themselves available as research directors and consultants. Consequently federal and provincial governments and universities initiated various studies which were concerned with such problems as displacement of the farmer,[22] the effects of urbanization[23], education in relation to rural-urban differences[24], and methods, policies and goals of community development and change.[25] Although some of the rural studies are evaluations of on-going government programs (Buckley and Tihanyi evaluated the impact of ARDA programs during the first three and one-half years of its operation for the Economic Council of Canada)[26] the majority of the above studies were intended to give background information and recommendations useful to policy-makers in dealing with dying family farms, rural poverty, migrant farmers, differential access to various social services, among other problems.

It may be of value to look at one typical example in more detail. Abramson's *Rural Non-Farm Communities and Families: Social Structure, Process and Systems in Ten Saskatchewan Villages* (1967) appears to be an attempt to answer two very important questions about the rural scene:

1. Is any particular community structure more conducive to rural rehabilitation and community development than others?
2. Which method(s) of instituting the needed changes would be most effective for different types of communities?

Her study demonstrated a clear distinction between three types of community systems: growth, maintenance, and deficit. At the risk of over- simplifying, the characteristics of each are as follows.

The growth system is quick to incorporate any new resources, opportunities, or improvements, and the accompanying search for new methods of adjustment produces an outward orientation, away from the local community. (In practical terms, this means that this type of community is quick to utilize development opportunities which are offered externally. Consequently, new ideas can be injected through almost any structure, with the expectation that they will be adopted. However, members of growth systems may utilize the resources from regional development programs to invest *outside* the area of rehabilitation, or to move on to greener pastures).

The maintenance system with its primary goal of maintaining the status quo in terms of the position of the community relative to other regional population centers, is characterized by stability, group loyalty, internalized traditional values, and clearly defined role relationships. Rather than promoting change, the maintenance system is only concerned with adapting to inevitable change which is produced by outside forces. Change is seen as a threat to the integrity and continuity of the system, as a penetration of a closed fortress of security. (Translated into development policy, this means that the maintenance system will not be receptive to novelty, will be vulnerable to strains resulting from inputs and likely will not be conducive to change through any other methods other than a long slow penetration of the intimate, traditional, informal community structure of influence.)

The deficit system does not grow or even "hold its own". Characterized by inadequate access to resources (both physical and social) the rural-oriented poor who belong to the deficit system, have one major goal: subsistence survival. Production and consumption are low, risk is high, and changing from enterprise to enterprise is common. The survival of the system over time demands constant adaptation, on the basis of limited and ad hoc problem-solving. (In practical terms, again, since the deficit system is used to change it adapts dynamically and quickly to any new input. Since it has few traditional patterns of response to the demands of the environment, it can be more receptive to the demands for adjustment that an external institution might make on it in exchange for its rehabilitation. The practical problem with a deficit system involves finding an effective method for introducing the changes in such a way that all the residents are contacted. Obviously, the promotion of grass-roots, self-help groups provides an answer to this problem by providing a channel of information through which programs of rehabilitation and development can flow.)

Abramson's study also attempted to demonstrate the interdependence of these systems to ensure that any community development program whose goal was the rehabilitation of a deficit system, for example, would take into account the fact that a change in one system would automatically affect any others which were socio-economically connected, since

> the growth system uses the other two as markets for its production, as a source of labor supply, and as means of extending its social control into the hinterland. The maintenance system uses members of the other two systems as a market; it derives specialized technical and professional workers that are not locally available from the growth system, and low-wage labor from the deficit system; it also obtains economic subsidies from the larger systems for public services and welfare payments. The deficit system derives unearned income in both money and other services from the other systems and may find a way to manipulate local merchants, credit suppliers and organizations of the maintenance system to obtain credit flexibility and tolerance in subsistence or deficit operations.[27]

Abramson's study is representative of most of the rural-oriented research: it attempts to describe the characteristics of the rural situation in such a way that policies concerning changes in the structure of the rural condition will be informed policies. However, from the viewpoint of sociology as an academic discipline, "rural-urban" studies done in the West, generally lack an over-all theoretical perspective which could tie the findings together into an integrated picture.

The area of rural-urban sociology has been of interest to social scientists for many years, stemming from the well-known dichotomous models (Toennie's Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, Durkeim's organic and mechanical, Redfield's folk and urban, and Becker's sacred and secular) and progressing to the concept of the rural-urban continuum,[28] an attempt to infuse the classical ideas with more reality. The concepts of rural and urban are primarily analytic constructs used in the study of characteristics of social systems, however, and others have warned that "we must not confuse an analytical distinction with empirical reality, for obviously a gradation exists from the relatively small, isolated village, through the larger village, to the market town, the largest city and finally to the dominant community (or communities)."[29]

Few of the studies of concern to this paper seem to demonstrate any degree of theoretical enlightment on these general topics, and more importantly, none question the validity, on the western Canadian scene, of the basic theories which have been evolved to define and explain the rural-urban scene of other countries. What western Sociology needs to fill the gap is a modern version of such a book as Duncan and Reiss' *Social Characteristics of Urban and Rural Communities*, with an addendum, "The Western Canadian Scene."[30] Motivated originally by political and practical reasons, the sociological interest in rural studies of the West is now waning without ever having developed a truly comprehensive picture of the plains area either in terms of theory or empirical documentation.

ETHNIC STUDIES

> From somewhat sentimental and condescending publications such as *from Black Bread to White Bread* type of the twenties . . . [Canadian Ethnic Studies] has developed into a discipline of diverse studies and accomplishments. Today it entails not only the broadly cultural aspects such as literature, linguistics, and the arts, but requires a knowledge of languages, public affairs, immigration policies, education, urbanization, labour and especially the psychology of assimilation.[31]

Western academia reflects the general Canadian scene: the sociological study of ethnic groups has blossomed into one of the major areas of plains' Sociology. Being stimulated by earlier studies of western ethnic Communities such as Dawson's excellent *Group Settlement—Ethnic Communities in Western Canada*, the modern sociologist considers the prairie area to be the greatest ethnic laboratory in Canada.

Compared to other provinces in Canada, the prairies exhibit a high proportion of the group we call "The Third Element"—all cultural groups other than those of French or British origin. In fact, in total population, the third element group *outnumbers* each of the two charter groups and accounts for half of the population of the prairie provinces.

The ethnic communites in the West grew out of a heavy flow of immigration encouraged by a federal government which defined western Canada as a vast natural-resources hinterland and market, and therefore subordinate to the manufacturing centres and the centres of political power—the great eastern metropolises of Toronto and Montreal.

Why did various ethnic groups immigrate? Usually motivated by economic deprivation, or religious, cultural or political persecution, this land of milk and honey, overflowing with freedom and unlimited opportunity, looked very appealing. However, these settlers from foreign lands were viewed by the charter groups as necessary evils, second class citizens, warm bodies to fill up a vast underdeveloped hinterland. No thought was given to the possibility that these groups of people who came from different cultural backgrounds, might, if they came in great enough numbers, create unwanted change in the Canadian way of life.[32] Immigrants often did not learn the language of the new country for several generations, especially if they had settled in ethnic ghetto communities, and by no means did they immediately adopt the life style which they found in Canada. In fact, the numerous social histories of ethnic settlements in the West illustrate in vivid detail the very different life styles and values to which the various ethnic groups were committed (very strongly committed in cases where the reason for immigration was persecution in the motherland).[33]

A sociological interest in the possible repercussions of these cultural differences has been recently reflected in a high degree of research activity centered around the role of ethnic groups in the educational system.[34] However, beyond an interest in specific repercussions of cultural differences in the West, among the most important questions in ethnic studies in the plains, both today and in the recent past, are how and to what extent these ethnic communities influenced contemporary society, and whether they will continue to shape the ethos of the prairies in any defineable and distinct way?[35]

Quite understandably, members of the "Third Element" claim that "immigrants . . . helped to change the position of the West in relation to Canada as a whole. Moreover, the ethnic communities . . . will undoubtedly continue to have a strong influence on the process of Canadian development perhaps even stronger than in the past."[36] In contrast, adherents of economic and geographical determinism would likely argue that western Canadian immigrants entered a country whose economic and geographical structures pre-determined the future of any newcomers in such a way that they had little choice, and certainly no independent influence over the historical development of the West in economic, political or cultural terms. Sociologists might argue that if a group is spatially and socially isolated and therefore experiences discrimination in its interaction with the core culture its influence on the development of the domimant culture would be minimal. Strangely enough, a review of the sociological literature reveals no empirical studies from which direct causal connections can be drawn between some structure or value of "Third Element" cultures and an obvious shift or change in the dominant Anglo-Saxon structure.

It is true, without a doubt, that various ethnic groups in Canada have added to both the material and ideational content of culture in the West, most obviously in such areas as fashion, recreational patterns, the arts, technology. However, it is still to be empirically determined whether the cultural content of an ethnic group has ever actually replaced any aspects of Anglo-Canadian culture in the West.[37] This would be much stronger support for the proposition that ethnic groups have helped to shape the present ethos of the prairies, including the way the prairies interact with other parts of Canada.

The question of the extent of assimilation of ethnic groups in the prairies is closely related to the influence of the third element, and an answer to it, might, by logical implication, answer in part the question about the degree of influence of ethnic groups on the development of the prairies as they are today. The following chart not only sets out the various steps in the assimilation of one cultural group by another, but provides a basis for sorting out some of the literature to date on that subject.

Table 1.

*Steps in the Assimilation Process**

Stages of Assimilation	*Description of the Process Involved*
1. cultural or behavioral	—change of cultural patterns to those of the host society
2. structural	—large scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of host society on the primary group level
3. marital	—large scale intermarriage
4. identification	—development of a sense of 'peoplehood' based exclusively on host society
5. attitude receptional	—absence of prejudicial attitudes in either direction
6. behavior receptional	—absence of discrimination in either direction
7. civic	—absence of value and power conflicts

*Modification from M. M. Gordon, "The Nature of Assimilation and the Theory of the Melting Pot", in E. P. Hollander and R. G. Hunt, eds. *Current Perspectives in Social Psychology*, New York, 1967, p. 102.

The few studies which exist on ethnic groups in the plains illustrate that the groups concerned can be found at almost all of the stages of the assimilation process, but with many of the groups still only involved in the first and second stages: change of cultural patterns, and entrance into the associational structure of the host society.[38] Some studies deal with the third step of assimilation, intermarriage,[39] and other studies suggest that some ethnic groups are at the stage of fighting their progression to the fourth stage, losing their consciousness of their identity as a unique group.[40]

Most ethnic groups in the West today would appear to prefer to achieve stages five, six and seven, i.e., a country ". . . in which every person and every group will be able to be equal citizens and partners regarded with understanding and respect,"[41] without having to pass through the first four stages. It is probably safe to assume that this desire for equal rights and influence has always existed, but its urgent articulation today was precipitated by the findings and conclusions of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism,[42] which was interpreted by many of the non-charter groups to be a rejection of such ideas as the Canadian Mosaic, multiculturalism, ethnicity, the "Third Element". Reaction to what was seen as a potentially threatening situation for the ethnic minorities in the West (who, it must be recalled, make up about 50% of the population of the three prairie provinces) led to two conferences in 1970, and a series of recommendations for safeguarding ethnic cultures and languages and preventing assimilation.[43]

The growing body of descriptive sociological literature on ethnic groups in the West, however lacks the underpinning of substantial theoretical work. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to fill in that void, it may be useful to look at one possible sociological explanation for the present ethnic situation in western Canada.

Ethnic groups in the prairies have generally evolved a practical solution to the conflict of living simultaneously within the influences of their own and the Anglo-Saxon culture. That solution might be called *cultural compartmentalization*. It is presently being used almost consistently wherever a dominant and minority culture must exist together and vocal members of ethnic groups are calling for official recognition of it. Such a solution is similar to the role of compartmentalization of an individual experiencing conflict between two roles. Cultural compartmentalization is the ability to perform within two cultures at different times with no implication that one is inherently better than the other, but that different situations demand different cultural responses.

Members of a dominant culture who seldom interact with people from other cultural backgrounds, are likely to find the problem of cultural conflict inapplicable. However, since historical circumstances usually dictate that one culture will dominate in a given area (the Anglo-Canadian culture in the plains) any different cultural group wishing to remain different and yet have access to the rewards of the society, must find a solution to the conflict created by the fact that access to those rewards will be defined by and controlled by the dominant culture. Cultural compartmentalization allows an ethnic minority to maintain the integrity of at least parts of his own culture and also to function within the definitions of the dominant culture according to the demands of the situation. However, the legitimization of this process presupposes an attitude on the part of the dominant culture that the cultural patterns of ethnic minorities are quite acceptable for members of those groups, and are not "second-class".

The concept of cultural compartmentalization is compatible with and in fact may explain how two opposing views can exist concerning the role of the ethnic communities in the development of, and the future of, the West. One view that is held by leaders of ethnic communities, i.e. the viability of the concept of multiculturalism, the successful functioning of many "equal" cultures alongside one another. The opposing view pictures western Canada as a melting pot for Anglo-Saxon culture, and any references to the existence of a "Mosaic" or multiculturalism are considered as mere mechanisms used by the dominant culture to hide the fact that all cultural groups have accepted the social and economic norms of Anglo-Saxon, western, prairie culture.[44] Both these views reflect the fact that most members of ethnic groups in the prairies successfully compartmentalize their cultural lives. The former view describes ethnic minorities when they are functioning in situations which demand action in accordance with their own cultural patterns (family life, religion, recreational activities, local political activities, etc.). In these situations, the ethnic culture appears to be and probably is, equally viable. Table 2 is one example of continuing support for ethnic differentiation in the prairies, namely, the high degree of support for ethnic publications.

Table 2.
*Geographical Distribution of Ethnic-Canadian Publications in the Three Prairie Provinces.**

Ethnic Source of the Publication**	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Manitoba
Finnish-Canadian	—	—	1
German-Canadian	13	13	60
Jewish-Canadian	6	—	6
Netherlandic-Canadian	3	—	—
Russian-Canadian	1	1	8
Slovak-Canadian	—	—	2
Ukrainian-Canadian	92	31	212

**There are no publications of the following groups in the Prairie provinces: Chinese-Canadians and Czech-Canadians.

*(Compiled from Bulletin of the Research Center for Canadian Ethnic Studies Volume 1, #1. Calgary, University of Calgary Press, 1969)

The latter view (the melting pot) describes ethnic minorities in situations which demand the ability to function on the terms of the dominant culture (economic, national political issues, some occupational activities, etc.). Here, it appears that the ethnic culture no longer exists, that it has "melted away", and in fact, in these situations, ethnic minorities do function according to the dictates of the dominant culture and do not appear to be different.

Cultural compartmentalization exists in behavioral terms, but individuals are not comfortable with it, and do not see it as a legitimate solution to the problem of ethnic conflict and assimilation because the existing values and attitudes towards ethnic groups are not compatible with the behavior which compartmentalization demands. On the one hand, the dominant cultural group has not conceded that in certain areas of life, different cultural adaptations are just as legitimate as their own: some of the traits of the ethnic minorities are looked upon as weird, repugnant, or just strange. Consequently, some ethnic minorities have trouble persuading future generations that their customs are just as valid as Anglo-Saxon customs. On the other hand, there is a fear on the part of the ethnic groups that involvement in those areas of life controlled by the dominant culture, will eventually destroy the whole minority culture. By implication, anyone who does take on the role dictated by the host culture while simultaneously professing allegiance to his own ethnic background may be considered hypocritical and a cultural "sell-out". Cultural compartmentalization occurs in behavior, but is not legitimized in the values and attitudes of either the minority ethnic groups or the dominant cultural group.

Along with maintaining demographic "rapport" with the changing ethnic scene in the West, sociologists must devote more time to the exploration of just such hypotheses as the idea of cultural compartmentalization. Only then will they be able to speak authoritatively on the subject of ethnic groups in the prairie West.

NATIVE PEOPLE

Several factors have stimulated sociological interest in native peoples. In 1966, approximately forty percent (40%) of the total native population of Canada resided in one of the three prairie provinces.[45] This size factor in combination with an ever-increasing tide of articulated native unrest, has prompted sociologists to study plains Indians, resulting in a clarification and substantiation of the assumption that the plains Indian, distinct from West Coast, Eastern Canadian, and central Canadian native, probably has developed the only genuinely regional society to exist on the plains.

The native population of the plains, largely passed out of sight and out of mind after the white man's surge of settlement. However, the impingement of such processes as industrialization, urbanization, the spread of mass communication, and the extensive exploitation of the natural resources by the white man, has brought the native peoples slowly emerging into the light, rubbing their eyes with bewilderment and shock like Rip Van Winkle waking up after a twenty year sleep. The process of this confrontation between two very different cultures and the resulting cultural adjustments which both sides are at present making, is of great sociological interest.

The plight of the native peoples is basically one of forced and almost uncontrolled culture shock. For the Indian who can no longer succeed on the reserve;[46] or the Métis whose rural community is slowly becoming a ghost town, a cruel choice must be made between rebuilding a life within a disadvantaged sub-culture based on slightly modified traditional values, or merging into the host society, learning all the formidable skills required. In some areas in Canada, it is still possible for Indians to engage successfully in mining, lumbering, fishing, trapping, etc., since the demands of these types of employment are more coincidental with much of the traditional plains Indian culture. But, the plains area has offered predominantly agriculture and ranching both of which would seem suited to native peoples whose heritage placed great meaning in a recurring cycle of economic, social and religious activities based on the different seasons of the year. Several of the Indian Treaties of the 1880's presumed that likelihood, and guaranteed animals, seed and agricultural implements. Hawthorn, in his *Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada*, notes that agricultural success was possible for a few select tribes in Alberta such as the Blood, Blackfoot, Sarcee and Sampson, who, with capital from oil and natural gas deposits, established successful ranching enterprises on their large tracts of grazing land.[47] But the majority of native people have not been successful farmers or ranchers.

Some reasons given for this failure include lack of knowledge and technology, and lack of government support.[48] Hawthorn acknowledges these reasons, but says that "a far more important reason for the failure, however, probably lies in attitudes of apathy or disinterest among Indians to farming as a way of life."[49] A predominantly agricultural economy cannot support large numbers of people at any time and so the whole prairie region suffers from an over-population of subsistence, marginal farmers. Reflecting this fact, many of the Indian bands who reside in the plains region, being very marginal in terms of agricultural operations, are among the most economically depressed and dependent bands in the whole country.

Using as a basis both old and more recent historical and social-psychological descriptions of the native populations of the West, several studies of the present day native population of the plains have emerged.[50] The provincial government of Manitoba undertook an extensive study of the Métis and Indian population of that province (1959) in order to obtain a comprehensive but also empirical picture of the social and economic situation of the native peoples both in rural and urban environments.[51] Heather Robertson's *Reservations are for Indians* has supplemented the government study with a more emotional, vivid portrayal of life on a reserve in southern Manitoba. In Alberta, B. Y. Card has undertaken a broad analysis of the Métis population with specific reference to the social, economic, and cultural factors related to a high tuberculosis incidence, a factor of ill health which influences the lives of a large proportion of Alberta's native population.[52] More specific studies cover such topics as the relationship between the organizational structure and economic role of native peoples,[53] confrontation with and the challenge of industrialization,[54] attitudes towards native peoples,[55] and the dynamics of interaction between natives and the educational system.[56]

One glaring void in sociological research on native peoples in the plains is in the area of the provincial native organizations. Each of the three prairie provinces has an active organization, and each organization has carried out either independently or with the assistance of research consultants, topic-specific studies of areas of life which are problematic to native peoples. Each organization is an invaluable source of information (whether formal or informal) for an inside view of the problems of Indian and Métis in the West. As yet this is an untapped source.[57]

OTHER STUDIES

It is unrealistic to assume that all sociological studies done in the plains fall into one of the aforementioned four categories of topics. There are many small pockets of research reflecting the individual interests of the researcher and/or his funding agency. For instance a province-wide community resource study undertaken by C. W. Hobart for the province of Alberta,[58] furnishes the reader with extensive and detailed information concerning the current poverty situation in that province, while other more specialized studies have concentrated both on historically significant aspects of poverty,[59] and on the economic future of the prairies.[60]

Finding answers to questions concerning the educational systems in the prairie provinces (education being an area of provincial jurisdiction) has motivated studies such as the Alberta and Manitoba Royal Commissions of Education (both in 1959), as well as more specific studies on such topics as educational opportunities and aspirations.[61]

A perspective of religion in the prairies can be found in Mann's *Sect, Cult and Church in Alberta*,[62] and on prairie political experimentation in Lipset's *Agrarian Socialism*.[63] While most of the well known "Social Credit Series" of volumes (all of them of deep interest to sociologists) were edited by a sociologist, S. D. Clark, most of the contributors came from other disciplines, history, political science, social philosophy, and so on.[64] That fact reflects the status of Sociology in Canada, for relative to such disciplines as History, Political Science, Geography, Economics, Sociology is young. The first major department on the western continent was not opened until 1893 at the University of Chicago, with the prairie province universities bringing up the tail end, sometimes combining Sociology with Anthropology (Alberta, 1961; Manitoba, 1964 and Saskatchewan, 1958). Consequently, many early studies of the plains which today appear to have sociological import were not done by sociologists at all, but by missionaries, historians, economists, educators, political scientists and others, who found, nevertheless, that an accurate picture of life in the plains had to reflect at least some sociological consciousness or imagination.[65]

Now that there are well-developed departments of Sociology in all the major western universities, it is still a sad comment that much of the sociological knowledge of the plains area appears in short reports commissioned by provincial governments searching for solutions to local dilemmas, and by the federal government seeking better methods of handling national and more specifically western discontent.[66] Academically there has been little or no unity in the direction of sociological research in the plains.

RESEARCH CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

It has been heartening of late to see centres for social research springing up in the prairie provinces in response to a desperate need for centralization, direction, and systematization of research activity. Unfortunately, it appears that each center has come to revolve around provincial needs and local interests or themes. Not surprisingly, at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, the Center for Community Studies has concentrated on the life and problems of the rural community and the farmer.[67] In contrast, in view of the great undeveloped potential and lack of information on the northernmost parts of the province of Manitoba, the Center for Settlement Studies affiliated with the University of Manitoba, has promoted research concentrating primarily on northern settlement. In the sociological area, concentration has been on two main aspects: the Indian-Métis situation in the north, and the social problems resulting from geographical isolation. Reflecting its location in the very centre of the city of Winnipeg, the University of Winnipeg houses an Institute for Urban Studies, where research is centred upon urban problems.

Both the University of Alberta and Calgary have also followed suit by developing and supporting research centres around provincial interests. The Boreal Institute, with its emphasis on all aspects of the far north, reflects a local theme: Edmonton is widely known as the "Gateway to the North". Money is made available to any qualified person interested in contributing useful knowledge about Northern Alberta. Also at the University of Alberta is the region's best equipped laboratory for prairie demographic studies. The University of Calgary boasts the Research Center of Canadian Ethnic Studies, whose goal it is to serve as a central depository for, and strong promoter of research into all aspects of ethnic groups in Canada. Although not directly under the auspices of a university, the Human Resources Research Council with its offices in Edmonton, concentrates on two areas of interest: a) the relationship between policy and research in the province and b) specific issues which are crucial in the process of government planning for future of the province (for instance urbanization, educational priorities, manpower evaluation, social and economic regional development).

Each of these centres is an invaluable source of bibliographical information concerning those areas of interest which their studies revolve around, but it is disheartening to note that there has been little or no interaction or interchange on any level between the centres, which of course, has prevented the development of some co-ordinated surge of sociological research with a prairie perspective, or a uniquely western Canadian connotation. It may be that the newly established Canadian Plains Area Studies Centre at Regina will help remedy that condition by fostering, as its constitution suggests, a community of discourse in plains studies on an interdisciplinary basis.

CONCLUDING POSTSCRIPT

It would be a mistake to leave a review of sociological research in the plains area without a word on the condition in which sociological study in prairie universities finds itself, for it is that which explains as well as anything the failure of prairie Sociology to tackle seriously the problem of regional Sociology. Sociology in western Canada was a "transplant" which brought with it some very stable characteristics. In order to achieve recognition as a new discipline in the United States, Sociology had taken a positivistic approach modelled on the natural sciences. The Sociology which thus came intact to the West was characterized methodologically, by objectivity, freedom from the influence of social values, emphasis on empirical research and fact-finding, and the logical, air-tight separation of man as professional and man as citizen. Theoretically, the emphasis was on functionalism, or the "order" perspective, whose basic tenets can be summarized as follows:

1. A Social system is unified culturally by shared values and is in a state of balance or at least, constantly working towards that state.
2. Social problems are due to one of two causes: a) misuse of the existing social structure, or b) failure on the part of individuals, to perform their roles properly, to fit the structure of the social system.
3. A 'Healthy' social system is one in social order, harmony, equilibrium, and integration.
4. Deviance and deviants are generally seen as pathological to the functioning of the social system.
5. The social system adjusts to social problems through the extension of existing social controls, through improving the adjustment of individuals to the social system, rather than adjustment of the system to fit the individuals.[69]

Sociology had evolved in a society which had basically the above characteristics, and being susceptible to social influence, the discipline reflected its early environment, and stabilized itself with this orientation. By virtue of their socio-economic origins, and their educational backgrounds, most of the sociologists in the West were, and are, "order oriented".

However, the cultural area to which sociologists came, the Canadian West, was not what some would consider a fertile garden for the growth and maturation of functional or "order" sociology. In *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, Gouldner suggests that functionalism is likely to become the predominant sociological approach in any economic or political type of society at a certain stage of development.[70] It is only necessary to list the characteristics of that stage to see that, in general, they did not, do not now, and probably never will apply to western Canada.

1. Industrialization has reached the "take-off" point, and is self-sustaining.
2. Social theorists and others can more readily define and conceptualize their society's problems as non-economic or purely social.
3. The new technology, because of its high level of productivity,

can provide mass gratifications and thus win the loyalty of large groups.

4. The master institutions and the national élites, by which industrialization is developed and controlled, are now widely accepted by members of the society.
5. Forms of political liberalization are permitted and extended for the differences among tthe contending factions are now less critical. Ruling political factions may accept the loss of office peacefully, because they do not believe that their successors will change the society in ways that violate their most fundamental values and commitments.
6. With industrialization, there is a growth in the number of the technical and administrative elites, and in the specialization and professionalization of a management whose authority rests upon an imputed competence based on technical skill, reliable information, and scientific methods. They are evaluated strictly on the basis of their level of competence, and they increasingly demand larger areas of discretion and decision-making autonomy in their own special area on the basis of this competence.
7. Greater autonomy will be developed and permitted among different sectors of the society.
8. Although the problem of the co-ordination of the activities of the various sectors increases, its solution is seen as merely a technical problem, not as a political problem. 'Imbalances' in the society are not seen by the "powers that be" as indicative of disloyalty, or resistance and deep-going hostility towards the society's master institutions and national élites. Public problems are less likely to be defined as expressing a deliberate intent to overthrow or subvert the master institutions.

By Gouldner's eight criteria, the Canadian plains society is hardly one for which a functional sociology is appropriate. Industrialization has certainly not reached a take-off point; common problems in the area are still primarily considered to be economic; acceptance of a high standard of living has not won any clear victory over non-commercial values; there is widespread criticism of the national élite; loss of political power is accepted peacefully; although experimentation in politics has accomplished significant changes in social structure there is widespread skepticism of specialization; the various sectors of prairie society are not becoming more autonomous; and politics is not looked on as simply a technical problem of adjusting imbalances between the various sectors of society.

It is not any wonder, then, that Sociology in western Canada has not developed any unified, integrated approach. Its overall perspective is literally out-of-touch with its own social environment. Prairie sociologists have generally acknowledged the priority of an economic process which is considered by many prairie people to be the root of their problems, and committed themselves to an (industrial) ideology which in many cases has not been accepted at other than its face value by many segments of the prairie population. Reflecting the general struggle of the discipline for recognition, Sociology in the western Canadian plains continues to make claims that it is value-free, objective and above the political struggle. The main problem is that in adopting such a stance, prairie Sociology only aggravates its essential malady, and continues to be unaware and uninformed of the West, of the ongoing struggles over basic values, of the distribution of power and influence, and of the real relationships between prairie people and the controlling élites of various sectors of the society.

Sociology by its very nature, is committed to reflecting upon the immediate social environment, and will always be subject to social conditioning. Sociology in western Canada, however, has evolved a strange and not totally compatible set of characteristics: a commitment to reflect the surrounding reality and yet an implicit picture of a social reality derived elsewhere. As yet, there are few "radical" sociologists in the West who are likely to correct this paradoxical condition. In contrast to Sociology in Quebec, for instance, the development of Sociology in the western Canadian plains cannot easily be linked to historical ideologies and events of the region, and, today, it is not used as an instrument for western Canadian self-realization. Its recent rapid development is not so much a reflection of Canadian social and ideological stimulation, but an attempt to "keep up with the (American) Joneses".

Having been formed to function in a different environment, it is not amazing, but quite obvious, why the discipline in the prairie West has not developed any basic picture of the West, but only a whole series of interesting, but rather unrelated empirical studies. Now it is understandable why rural studies concentrate not on developing a complete picture of the rural component in the structure of the West, but on discovering the best ways to help the rural component adjust to the urbanization and industrialization of the Canadian plains. It becomes obvious now also why ethnic studies have been essentially descriptive: sociologists have felt a duty to record the idiosyncracies of different ethnic groups before they disappear in the standardization process of modernization. Likewise, the Indian and Métis are defined as cultural misfits, who unfortunately have not yet adjusted to an urbanizing and industrializing culture. Finally, on the question of the study of regionalism, regional Sociology has at one time had reasonable success in the United States. With only an invisible political line separating the American plains from the Canadian plains, sociologists have inevitably assumed that the prairies (Canadian) were also a socio-cultural region, but, as it has been argued earlier in this paper, this may not be true. We have a long road ahead.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Most of the following theoretical material on regions and regionalism was modified from C. C. Zimmerman and R. E. DuWors, *Graphic Regional Sociology*, Cambridge, 1952.

[2] B. Y. Card, *The Canadian Prairie Provinces from 1870-1950: A Sociological Introduction*, Toronto, 1960, p. ix.

[3] B. Y. Card, ed., *Perspectives on Regions and Regionalism and Other Papers*, Edmonton, 1969; A. K. Davis ed., *Canadian Confrontations*, Edmonton, 1970.

[4] See the comments of Mildred Schwartz in David K. Elton, ed., *One Prairie Province? Conference Proceedings and Selected Papers*, Lethbridge, 1970, p. 105.

[5] Donald L. Mills, "The Occupational Composition of the Prairie Provinces: A Regional-National Comparison, to the Royal Society of Canada, 1968.

[6] Leroy O. Stone, *Urban Development in Canada*, Ottawa, 1961.

[7] Michael C. Lanphier, "Regional Aspects of Survey Research in North America: the Case of the Prairie Region," in Card, *Perspectives on Regions*, pp. 49-56.

[8] John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic*, Toronto, 1965, pp. 30-32. Large numbers of European immigrants to Canada only stayed a short time, and then moved to the U.S. Between 1901 and 1921, immigrants numbered 3,356,000 while the number of foreign born in Canada increased by 1,256,000. In the 10 years after World War I, roughly a million people entered Canada and roughly a million left. From 1931-1944 more people left the country than came in. From one-quarter to one-fifth of all immigrants to Canada between 1951 and 1961 had left by 1961.

[9] Knowledge is imparted very effectively through contrast and comparison, a method which does and in this case has tended to stress *differences*, because there has been no underlying value to motivate the teaching of similarities among the three prairie provinces.

[10] G. F. G. Stanley, "The Western Canadian Mystique," in D. P. Gagan ed., *Prairie Perspectives*, Toronto, 1970, p. 19.

[11] Lanphier in Card, *Perspectives on Regions*, p. 53.

[12] J. Gillin, "National and Regional Cultural Values in the United States," *Social Forces*, Vol. XXXIV (1955), pp. 107-13.

[13] M. S. Lipset, "Canada and the U.S.: a comparative view," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol I, (November, 1964), pp. 173-85; and Marian C. McKenna, "The Melting Pot: comparative observations in the U.S. and Canada," *Sociology and Social Research*. Vol. LIII (July, 1969), pp. 433-47.

[14] Stanley in Gagan, *Prairie Perspectives*, p. 9.

[15] See Elton, ed., *One Prairie Province?*

[16] For example, *ibid*., p. 178: "the impact of the tremendous investments from Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong in Western Canada . . . is completely changing the attitudes of the people." (Senator Cameron)

[17] T. L. Smith, "Rural Sociology in the U.S. and Canada," *Current Sociology*, Vol. V, No. 1 (1959), pp. 5-75.

[18] For example H. A. Innis, *The History of the C.P.R.*, Toronto, 1923; several volumes in the Canadian Frontiers of Settlements Series; and A. S. Morton, *History of Prairie Settlement*, Toronto, 1938.

[19] Province of Saskatchewan, *Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life*: A Summary, Regina, 1956.

[20] *Canada Yearbook*, 1969, p. 158.

[21] Canada, *Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act*: Federal Provincial Rural Development Agreement, 1965-1970, Ottawa, 1965.

[22] Jane A. Abramson, *A Study of the Effects of Displacement on Farmers Whose Land was Purchased for Two Community Pastures in Saskatchewan*, Saskatoon, 1966; Marc A. Tremblay, and W. J. Anderson, eds., *Rural Canada in Transition*, Ottawa, 1866.

[23] Jane Abramson, *Adjustments associated with Migration from Farm Operator to Urban Wage Earner*, Saskatoon, 1966; W. B. Baker, "Rural Housing in the Prairie Provinces," *Habitat*, Vol. IV, No. 4, pp. 16-21; R. G. McIntosh et al, eds., *Urbanization and Urban Life in Alberta*, Edmonton, 1970; James A. Munger, *Report on Housing and Environmental Conditions in the Prairie Provinces*, Saskatoon, 1966.

[24] B. Y. Card et al, *School Achievement in Rural Alberta*, mimeographed report on Project 614 of the Alberta Advisory Committee on Educational Research, 1966; D. M. Connor and D. W. Magill, *The Role of Education in Rural Development*, mimeographed ARDA Research Report $RE-1, n.d.; Irene Crofts, "Comparison of the Performance of Rural and Urban Children on the Subtests and Items of the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children," unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, University

of Manitoba, 1955; L. Driedger and L. B. Siemens, *Some Rural-Urban Differences between Manitoba High School Students*, Winnipeg, 1965; J. A. Ferguson, "Improving rural organization," in *Canada Conference on Education*, Ottawa, 1968.

[25] Jane Abramson, *The Significance of the Human Motivation Process in Rural Development*, Saskatoon, 1966; ………………, *Rural-Non-Farm Communities and Families: Social Structure, Process and Systems in Ten Saskatchewan Villages*, Saskatoon, 1967; R. F. Badgley et al, "The Impact of Medicare in Wheatville, Saskatchewan, 1960-1965," Canadian Journal of Public Health, Vol. LVIII, No. 3 (1967); W. B. Baker, ed., *Rehabilitation and the Rural Development Matrix*, Saskatoon, 1965; ………………, *Rural Rehabilitation Policies: An Exploration of Goals, Values, and Alternatives*, Saskatoon, 1965; H. R. Baker, "The Impact of Central government services on the small community," *Canadian Public Administration*, Vol. III, No. 2 (June) pp. 97-106; W. M. Hlady, *A Community Development Project Amongst the Churchill Band at Churchill, Manitoba*, Saskatoon, 1960; G. A. Kristjanson, "Human Factors in Area Development," Interlake Resource Conference, Province of Manitoba mimeographed report, 1964; D. E. Willmott, *Industry Comes to a Prairie Town*, Saskatoon, 1962.

[26] H. L. Buckley and E. Tihanyi, "Canadian policies for rural adjustment, The Economic impact of ARDA, PFRA, and MMRA," Saskatoon, manuscript at the Center for Community Studies, 1966.

[27] Abramson, *Rural Non-Farm Communities and Families*, p. 168.

[28] Richard Dewey, "The Rural-urban continuum: real but relatively unimportant," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LXVI (1960) pp. 60-66; Stuart Queen and David B. Carpenter, *The American City*, New York, 1953; Charles T. Steward, Jr., "The rural-urban dichotomy: concepts and uses, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LXIV (1958), pp. 152-58; Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a way of life," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XL (1938), pp. 1-24.

[29] Gideon Sjoberg, "The rural-urban dimension in pre-industrial, transitional and industrial societies," in R. E. Faris, ed., *Handbook of Modern Sociology*, Chicago, 1964, pp. 127-59.

[30] New York, 1956.

[31] Clive H. Cardinal, ed., *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. I, No. 2 (1969) p. viii.

[32] It is assumed here that the dominant life style in the Prairies was Anglo-Canadian.

[33] Peter B. Bargan, "A History of the Mennonites in Alberta," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1953; T. C. Byrne, "The Ukrainian Community of North Central Alberta," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1937; C. A. Dawson, *Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada*, Toronto, 1936; Robert England, *The Central European Immigrant in Canada*, Toronto, 1929; E. B. E. Gerwin, "A Survey of the German-speaking Population of Alberta," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1938; W. Kristjanson, *The Icelandic People in Manitoba, Winnipeg*, 1965; Victor Peters, *All Things Common: A History of the Hutterians in Manitoba;* E. L. Pitt, "The Hutterian Brethren in Alberta," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1949; Margaret V. Ray, "Sudeten Settlement in Western Canada," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1952; V. J. Kaye, *Early Ukrainian Settlement in Canada 1895-1900*, Toronto, 1964; John Warkentin, "Mennonite Settlements in Manitoba, A Study in Historical Geography," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1959; Murray Wenstob, "The Work of the Methodist Church Among Settlers in Alberta up to 1914, with Special Reference to the Formation of New Congregations and Work Among the Ukrainian People," unpublished B.D. thesis, St. Stephen's College, Edmonton, 1959; H. Wenholt, "Studies in Social Life," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of The Hague, Holland, 1961; Andrew Willows, "A History of the Mennonites particularly in Manitoba," unpublished M.A. thesis, 1924; Paul Yuzyk, *The Ukrainians in Manitoba: A Social History*, Toronto, 1953.

[34] B. N. Bilash, "Bilingual Schools in Manitoba, 1897-1916," unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1960; Isaac I. Friesen, "The Mennonites of Western Canada with Special Reference to Education," unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1934; Harvey H. Herstein, "The Growth of the Winnipeg Jewish Community and the Evolution of its Educational Institutions," unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1964; P. G. Klassen, "A History of Mennonite Education in Manitoba," unpublished M.Ed. thesis University of Manitoba, 1959; Alec Saruk, "Academic Performance of the Students of Ukrainian Descent and the Cultural Orientation of their Parents," unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1966.

[35] When using the phrase "ethnic group", we are referring to those who have a sense of belonging to a cultural grouping, and share in the group's collective will to exist.

[36] A. J. Arnold, to the conference, *Multiculturalism for Canada*, Edmonton, August, 1970, Edmonton, 1970.

[37] One must be cautious when discussing the influence of an immigrant culture on a host culture. A distinction can be made between changing the culture patterns themselves, and simply contributing to the upkeep and development of the host society through its already existing cultural patterns.

[38] E. D. Boldt, "Conformity and Deviance: The Hutterites of Alberta," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1966; C. W. Hobart, "Italian Immigrants in Edmonton," Report to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Ottawa, 1967, cited in Book I, *The Official Languages;* K. Korella, "Personality Adjustment of German Baptists in Alberta," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1952; H. Pinuita, "Cultural Adjustment of the Ukrainians in Manitoba," unpublished B.Ed. thesis, 1951; Aaron Sawatzky, "The Mennonites of Alberta and their Assimilation," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1952.

[39] Richard Gilbert, "Jewish-Gentile Intermarriage: an Empirical Study of its Consequences," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1971; Marlene Stefanow, "A Study of Intermarriage of Ukrainians in Saskatchewan," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1962.

[40] W. Darcovich, *Ukrainians in Canada: The Struggle to Retain their Identity*, Ottawa, 1967; V. Kupchenko, "Progress of the Ukrainian Pioneers of Alberta in their First Sixty Years," unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1961.

[41] Paul Yuzyk, "The true Canadian Identity-multiculturalism and the emerging new factor" in *Multiculturalism for Canada*, p. 12.

[42] Canada. *Preliminary Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, Ottawa, 1967.

[43] *Conference Proceedings for the Multiculturalism for Canada Conference*, Edmonton, 1970; the other conference was the "Manitoba Mosaic Conference" in October, 1970.

[44] J. E. Rea, "The Roots of Prairie Society," in Gagan, *Prairie Perspectives*, pp. 46-55.

[45] *Canada Yearbook*, 1969, p. 188.

[46] This does not mean that reserves are vanishing. In fact, the actual number of people who permanently live on them is thought to be constantly increasing. Few Indians sever their connections with the reserve. However, economic well-being is synonymous with employment off the reserve.

[47] Harry B. Hawthorn, ed., *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada*, Ottawa, 1966, p. 151.

[48] Heather Robertson, *Reservations are for Indians*, Toronto, 1970.

[49] *Op. Cit.*, Hawthorn, p. 160.

[50] Marcel Giraud, *Le Métis Canadien: son rol dans l'histoire des provinces de l'Ouest*, Paris, 1945; A. I. Hallowell, "Temporal Orientation in Western Civilization and in a preliterate society," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXXVII (1937); ...., "Fear and Anxiety as cultural and individual variables in a primitive society," *Journal of Social Psychology, Vol. IX* (Feb., 1938), pp. 25-47; .... "The incidence, character and decline of polygamy among the Lake Winnipeg Cree and Saulteaux," *American Anthropologist Vol. XI* (June, 1938), pp. 223-36; ...., "The social function of anxiety in a primitive society," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. VI, (Dec. 1941) pp. 869-81; W. M. Hlady, "Indian migrations in Manitoba and the West," in Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Papers III, Vol. XVII (n.d.) pp. 24-53; Edward Rogers, *Indians of Canada*, Toronto, 1969.

[51] Manitoba, Department of Agriculture and Immigration, Vol. I, *A Study of the Population of Indian Ancestry Living in Manitoba* and Vol. III, *The People of Indian Ancestry in Rural Manitoba: A Social and Economic Study* (parts of a three volume series), Winnipeg, 1959.

[52] B. Y. Card et al, *The Métis in Alberta Society*, Edmonton, 1963.

[53] Hawthorn in *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada*, pp. 123-24, points out that general sociological studies have demonstrated a high correlation between organizational activity and economic advancement: "A large but economically depressed and dependent band such as Norway House or Cross Lake in Northern Manitoba has fewer organizations among its members than an economically more developed band. . . . The most economically depressed bands such as a

marginal farming community like Piapot, Saskatchewan . . . appear to be almost completely without organizations. . . ." See also Isaac Beaulien, *Organizational Aspects of the Manitoba Indian*, Winnipeg, 1968; Helen Buckely et al, *The Indians and Métis of Northern Saskatchewan: A Report on Economic and Social Development*, Saskatoon, 1963; ………………, *The Farm Potential of Two Saskatchewan Indian Reserves*, Saskatoon, 1966; Canadian Association of Social Workers, Manitoba Branch, "A Study of the Problems of the Métis in Manitoba," unpublished.

[54] Manitoba, Department of Industry and Commerce, *the Indian and Métis—a Modern Solution*, Winnipeg, n.d.; "Indians Meet the Challenge of the 20th Century," *Manitoba Business Journal*, June, 1966, pp. 188-89; S. Jamieson and H. Hawthorn, "The Role of the Native People in Industrial Development in Northern Manitoba, 1960-1975," mimeographed report prepared for the Committee on Manitoba's Economic Future, Winnipeg, 1962.

[55] J. F. G. Dallyn and E. Frazer, "A Study of the Attitudes towards Indians and People of Indian Descent," mimeographed study for the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, Winnipeg, 1965.

[56] The Community Conference, "Findings of the Community Conference," unpublished report, The Pas, Manitoba, 1961; M. S. Rattan, "Longitudinal prediction of school achievement for Métis and Eskimo pupils," *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. XIV, No. 1 (1968) pp. 37-41; Theda Zeek, "Change in the Indian Education Scene," *Saskatchewan Bulletin* Vol. III (Feb., 1969) p. 8.

[57] Menno Boldt, a member of the Department of Sociology at the University of Lethbridge (Alberta) has extensively interviewed the leaders of native organizations across Canada as part of a Ph.D. dissertation now in progress. This material hopefully will greatly increase our knowledge of native peoples.

[58] Charles W. Hobart, *Community Opportunity Assessment — General Report*, Edmonton 1967.

[59] C. B. Davidson, *Unemployment in Manitoba*, Winnipeg, 1938; V. Fowke, *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy*, Toronto, 1957; Elsie Lawson, "Public Welfare in Manitoba," *Canadian Welfare*, Vol. XV, No. 3 (1969), pp. 14-23; W. A. MacKintosh, *The Economic Background of Dominion Provincial Relations*, Toronto, 1965; Manitoba, Department of Agriculture and Conservation, *The People of Poverty*, a paper presented to the Federal Provincial Conference on Poverty and Opportunity in Ottawa, 1965, Winnipeg, 1965.

[60] Manitoba, Department of Industry and Commerce, Committee on Manitoba's Economic Future, "Social Factors and Economic Growth: Manitoba 1962-1975," Part II, Winnipeg, 1963; Human Resources Research Council of Alberta, *Social Futures* Alberta: 1970-2005, Final Report of the Alberta Delphi Interaction Studies, Edmonton, 1970.

[61] E. F. Sharp and G. A. Kristjanson, *Manitoba High School Students and Drop-Outs*, Winnipeg, 1966; L. B. Siemens and P. Forcese, *Urban Related Factors and the Aspiration Level of Manitoba Senior High School Students*, Winnipeg, 1965; L. B. Siemens and W. Jackson, *Educational Plans and their Fulfillment: A Study of Selected High School Students in Manitoba, Winnipeg*, 1965.

[62] Toronto, 1957.

[63] Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1950 (revised with additional material, 1968).

[64] For a discussion of the series see the historical and political science papers in this collection.

[65] For the history of sociology in the region see B. Y. Card, The Expanding Relation; Sociology in Prairie Universities, Canadian Plains Area Studies Centre, Regina, 1972. Many studies by historians, political scientists, and others continue to embody much of sociological interest.

[66] An example of one such provincial study is Hobart's Human Resources Development Study cited above, commissioned by the provincial government for the purpose of finding information about the nature and extent of poverty in Alberta. Many informative studies have also resulted from the Federal government's interest in rural poverty and the corresponding legislation of the ARDA and FRED programs. (See-Canada: Agricultural and Rehabilitation and Development Act: Federal-Provincial Rural Development Agreement, 1965-1970).

[67] The Center for Community Studies is not longer in existence although their publications are still available from the Extension Division, Publications Office, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. As of summer, 1971, William Martin, a graduate student in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, was engaged in composing a history of the Center, for completion in the fall of 1971.

[68] The Human Resources Research Council of Alberta has just completed an extensive survey which collected data on 239 socio-economic variables for the population of Alberta (See F. Sukdeo, "Adjustment of Immigrants and Inter-Provincial Migrants in Alberta," a study in process under the Human Resources Research Council of Alberta and the Province of Alberta, reported in *Inform*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1971). Warren Kalback, Karol Krotki and Wayne McVey are the names most closely associated with the demography output by sociologists in the Prairies.

[69] Max Black, ed., *The Social Theories of Talcott Parsons*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1961; Robert K. Merton, "Manifest and Latent Functions," in Merton, ed., *Social Theory and Social Structure*, New York, 1957, pp. 19-84; Talcott Parsons, *The Social Systems*, New York, 1951.

[70] Alva W. Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology*, New York, 1970, especially pp. 467-69. My apologies extended to Gouldner for the liberties taken in modifying and summarizing his analysis.

8

PRAIRIE LITERATURE AND ITS CRITICS

E. A. McCOURT

Prairie literature properly begins with the nineteenth century travellers and explorers—Southesk, Palliser, Butler, Cheadle and a dozen more—who crossed the great plains at the behest of governments wishing to know something of the resources of the great Northwest, or at the urging of their own impulse to adventure. They were literate men all, and men of imagination. Occasionally their romantic sensibilities lured them into a morass of purple prose, but at their best they wrote with a command of language and a feeling for their environment which give them rank among the best of North American travel writers. Who, for instance, has described better than Captain William Butler the impact on the eye and the imagination of:

> a view so vast that endless space seems for once to find embodiment, and at a single glance the eye is satiated with immensity. There is no mountain range to come up across the skyline, no river to lay its glistening folds along the middle distance, no dark forest to give shade to foreground or to bring perspective, no speck of life, no trace of man, nothing but the wilderness. Reduced thus to its own nakedness, space stands forth with almost terrible grandeur. One is suddenly brought face to face with that enigma we try to comprehend by giving it the names of endless, interminable, measureless; that dark inanity which broods upon a waste of moorland at dusk, and in which fancy sees the spectral and the shadowy.[1]

Dr. Cheadle, the genial medical man whose account of his party's blunderings through northern Saskatchewan and British Columbia fluctuates between near-tragedy and farce, created a character, the down-at-heels Irishman Paddy O'Byrne, who is worthy of Dickens (or, at the very least, Charles Lever); and the Earl of Southesk, that solemn owl who read *Othello* by the light of a smoky midwinter campfire and made tear-stained notes thereon, was capable, when he forgot to moralize, of describing a dramatic incident in admirably straightforward prose.

Palliser and Butler have been the subjects of recent biographies;[2] and Mary Quale Innis' *Travellers West*[3] offers a pleasant elementary introduction to Southesk, Cheadle, Fleming, and Grant, but so far the self-told tales of these early prairie travellers have largely been ignored, either as literature in their own right, or as a possible influence on the

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E. A. McCourt, Professor of English at the University of Saskatchewan, is well-known as the author of numerous short stories and articles, several novels and travel books, the biography of Sir William Butler, and the much-used pioneering study, *The Canadian West in Fiction*. His recent death will be mourned by all students of prairie life and letters.

attitude of prairie pioneers towards the land they settled, and thus indirectly on what the pioneers and their descendants wrote.

The missionaries who spread the Word through the plains country from early in the nineteenth century were more concerned with saving savage souls from hell—or from the machinations of proselytizing rivals which they assumed was much the same thing—than with the creation of literature, but they too found time to record their activities, and on occasion their reflections, in books, journals and diaries distinguished by their voluminousness rather than literary craftsmanship. John McDougall, who took the entire prairie region for his parish, offers the most substantial evidence that he who runs may write—his books take up several feet of library shelving. Many of his books he wrote with a down-east Methodist reading public in mind; none the less they deserve a more detailed and critical examination than his biographer gives them.[4]

For purposes of a literary survey the settlers who streamed into the prairie country on the heels of the Mounted Police may be divided into two vaguely defined and sometimes overlapping groups—English-speaking and others. Neither group made any immediate significant contribution to the development of a distinctive prairie literature. Writers of Anglo-Saxon background were almost to a man imitators rather than creators; and the members of other ethnic groups, handicapped by unfamiliarity with the English language and primarily concerned with learning to survive in a new harsh land, were much more interested in preserving, out of homesickness and sometimes national pride, a few remnants of their own inheritance than in contributing directly to the creation of a new culture in a new land.

It is a common but largely fallacious theory that until a society achieves a substantial degree of economic security it cannot be expected to show much progress in the arts. (The cultural histories of Ireland and Iceland, to cite two obvious examples, flatly contradict the theory.) The truth is that the prime interest of the people who constitute a frontier society is and always has been material gain; and that even after security, and perhaps modest wealth, have been attained, attention continues to focus for a long time on material acquisitions rather than on the arts. So it is that the first significant contributions to a literature reflecting the prairie environment are made not by the first or even second generation of settlers but, predictably, by outsiders. The writer or artist native-born to the prairies is a comparatively recent phenomenon.

Of these outsiders Ralph Connor is by all odds the best known, and in some ways the most distinguished. (His critical biography still remains to be written.) Ralph Connor was a Canadian from Ontario, but most of the early fiction which makes use of a prairie setting was written by wandering Old Country men—among them Ridgewell Cullum, Harold Bindloss and Frederick Niven. Although commercially influenced to provide sensational plots and good-guy bad-guy characters in accord with the tradition already firmly established in the United States, these writers exhibit a degree of craftsmanship and a concern for good writing not often found in the novels we categorize as "westerns". So far no attempt has been made to examine critically the work of these novelists either individually (with the exception of Niven) or as a group, or to differentiate it from that of such writers as Ralph Connor and Arthur Stringer whose background is eastern Canadian.

Although the early settlers themselves wrote little of artistic merit—being content, in their creative moments, to write bad imitations of Tennyson and Mrs. Hemans or to adapt Gilbert and Sullivan, through the use of topical allusions, for presentation in the local Town Hall—they none the less made a vital contribution to the development of our prairie culture which our literary critics seem largely unaware of. Many of them, both men and women, were indefatigable diarists and journal-makers, as the holdings of prairie university libraries and provincial archives make evident. These personal records of the early settlers, prosaic, matter-of-fact as most of them appear (the birth of a family heir and of a litter of piglets being as a rule treated as happenings of equal importance), have so far been the preserve of our historians and social scientists; it is surely time they were examined in detail—there is work here for a score of research students—not only in the hope of our finding the occasional nugget, a prairie Pepys buried in archives dust, but in order to help us come to grips with the character of the early settler (which we have almost certainly romanticized), his view of life, his aspirations, his reaction to his environment—all essential to an understanding of the culture whose foundations he helped to lay.

The recently published *Land of Promise*,[5] reminiscences of a literate old-timer edited by John Archer (another historian!), is an example of the sort of treasure the zeal of relatives and researchers occasionally brings to light.

Of the prose writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who are westerners by adoption if not by birth-right, Ralph Connor was of course the first to win international recognition, but it is the tall gaunt Norseman, Frederick Philip Grove, who is the darling of our critics. Grove has been the subject of more articles, theses, monographs and gossip than all other prairie writers put together—a disproportion which casts him in the altogether misleading role of giant among pygmies. Part of Grove's immense prestige stems from his myth-making capacity with himself as central to the myth. (The title of his autobiography, *In Search of Myself*, is a revelatory choice.) Grove is the most openly egotistical of our prose writers—the hero of one of his novels is obviously and crudely modelled on Lear—and, as so often happens, something of his own view of himself has rubbed off on his critics. (*What the potent say so oft, can it fail to be somewhat true?*)

In spite of continuing widespread interest in Grove the definitive study of the man and his work remains to be written. Douglas Spettigue's recent contribution[6] to the Copp Clark Studies in Canadian Literature Series adopts an original and stimulating approach whose development is inhibited by limitations of space.

The decade of the thirties is by all odds the most memorable period in the history of the plains country, and provided for plains dwellers a traumatic experience whose consequences have extended far beyond the generation who experienced it in the flesh. Perhaps because the reality is too horrifying to live with, even in recollection, much of what has been written about the Depression consists of reminiscences which attempt to convert the Dirty Thirties into an almost jolly experiment in community togetherness. The time does, however, have its *Grapes of Wrath*—Sinclair Ross's widely praised *As For Me and My House*.[7] But even Ross, whose awareness of the artist's responsibility is beyond question, as his handful of superb short stories testifies, seems to have lost his nerve in writing *As For Me and My House*, when, instead of driving through to a logically inevitable conclusion, he provides his hero and heroine with a fairy godmother kind of escape from the trap which has closed upon them.

So far no one has told the story of the people who didn't escape.

As For Me and My House and Anne Marriott's oft-anthologized poem, *The Wind Our Enemy*[8] seem to be all that we have found worth saving from the very considerable body of prose and verse which the Depression called into being, or at least provided the background for. So far, though, no sustained effort has been made by our literary critics to explain the failure of western writers, with the exception of Ross, to communicate a vision of the human condition as spot-lighted by the Great Depression. Here again it must be conceded that the historians, sociologists, and economists have in their respective fields done a more responsible and thorough job than the literary critics. So, too, have our newspaper men; James Gray's *The Winter Years*[9] is a model of responsible reportage.

The decade of the forties, for those who remember, was a time of hope. We heard a pride of poets roaring—and sometimes striking the note of authentic poetry—and read at least half a dozen novels of promise, the most conspicuous among them being W. O. Mitchell's *Who Has Seen the Wind*,[10] Edward Meade's *Remember Me*[11] and Henry Kreisel's *The Rich Man*.[12] But the bloom died on promise of the fruit. Are westerners peculiarly prone to being one-shot novelists? And if so, why? Or is what may appear at first glance a regional phenomenon in fact a universal commonplace? That familiar campus figure, the Graduate Student in Search of a Thesis, might do worse than try to find the answers.

During the past twenty years several prairie poets of authentic talent have made themselves and their works known; but most of them have fled eastwards to academic eyries with consequences for their art which cannot yet be evaluated. (Will, for example, Eli Mandel's power of apocalyptic vision, at its strongest and most terrifying in such a "western" poem as "Estevan", be permanently blurred by Toronto smog?) Of the handful of prairie novelists published between 1950 and 1970 only two seem deserving of serious critical attention (unless we claim Gabrielle Roy as a westerner). Adele Wiseman wrote *The Sacrifice* in 1956,[13] a first novel of great technical competence and poetic insight—so far, alas, without a successor; and Margaret Laurence, the girl from Manawaka, has earned for herself an authentic international reputation. Mrs. Laurence is still young; but we have already written so much about her and her books that she is now assuming the dimensions of a Canadian Classic and is in danger of being embalmed while still alive.

The primary materials for our study of the creative literature of the prairie region are readily accessible; most university libraries have built up substantial collections of Canadiana, and the archives of the prairie provinces bulge with the records of the pioneers. What of value has thus far been done with this primary material, which embraces poetry, fiction, *belles lettres*, letter collections, and files of old newspapers which often gave generous space to the creative efforts of their subscribers? What has been done, and what remains for critics and researchers still to do?

Criticism and research pertaining to prairie literature is almost entirely a recent development, the first detailed treatment of a single genre appearing as late as 1949.[14] This seeming lag is not surprising since the settlement of the Canadian prairies is less than one hundred years old and significant literary output confined almost entirely to our own century. (It is even less surprising when we consider that the first genuinely scholarly work in Canadian letters dates from 1920;[15] the first important work of criticism from 1943.[16]) Most surveys of Canadian literature make little more than cursory mention of prairie writers, and only the most superficial attempt to examine their work in relation to its environment. At present, two Canadian publishing houses[17] are issuing a series of brief studies, in paperback form, of outstanding Canadian writers. Among western writers Grove, Sinclair Ross, Margaret Laurence, Dorothy Livesay and James Reaney make the lists—Grove and Mrs. Laurence twice over. Most of the books are being written by university teachers; those so far published are meticulously researched, and the appended bibliographies lay the groundwork for future and perhaps more detailed studies of the writers under consideration. Herein lies their chief value.

The critical content of the volumes is less deserving of praise; it is competent, occasionally gushing, usually cautious, and with the exception of Douglas Spettigue's admirable study of Grove, unexciting. The publishers are none the less to be warmly commended for their efforts to make available to teachers and students a substantial body of classroom-oriented criticism and research which will no doubt stimulate the study of "Canadian Literature" in our high schools and universities.

The little magazines which are born and flourish like the flowers of the field and perish almost as quickly, usually reflect a genuine concern for the health of our native literature and an intelligent critical appreciation thereof. John Sutherland's *Northern Review*, which ran a distinguished course from 1945 to 1956, is much the best of those now deceased. (An anthology of selections from the *Review* would almost certainly be a valuable contribution to our creative and critical literatures.) Some of the *Review* articles examine in detail the work of individual writers, but the most interesting and valuable are general surveys of the Canadian literary scene—usually containing specific references to prairie writers—of which Ralph Gustafson's "Writing and Canada",[18] James Reaney's "Towards the Last Spike",[19] and Sutherland's "The Past Decade in Canadian Poetry"[20]—in which he suggests that the Depression of the thirties drove many western writers, including Dorothy Livesay, Anne Marriott and Earle Birney into the Marxist camp—are representative.

Literary periodicals which, thanks to intelligent editing and Canada Council benevolence, are presently enjoying vigorous life include *The Tamarack Review* (whose popularity may derive in part from its being frequently mistaken for a lumber industry trade journal), and the more mundanely titled *Canadian Literature*. *The Tamarack Review*, publishes, in the main, original creative work, often of a very high order; *Canadian Literature* is essentially a journal of criticism which, while not neglecting to publish the occasional sweeping survey of our cultural progress (or lack thereof), devotes most of its space to detailed examination of individual authors. Among western writers Stead, Niven, Ross, and Grove, to name a few of many, have been subjects of perceptive articles which usually make some attempt to relate the writer to his prairie background.

One of the most valuable features of *Canadian Literature* is the annual checklist of Canadian writing which it provides. The list includes not only a cataloguing of new publications and critical articles, but, at irregular intervals, of graduate theses completed during the year on aspects of Canadian literature. Most of the theses which are "western" in subject matter deal with individual novelists—Grove, Sinclair Ross, and more recently Margaret Laurence are popular favourites—suggesting, perhaps unfairly, a preponderance of worthwhile prairie prose writers over poets. Peter Stevens' recently completed Ph.D. thesis on Canadian poetry between the two World Wars deals exhaustively with several western poets,[21] notably Dorothy Livesay, and does much to create an appropriate balance. It can be predicted with some confidence that the current interest in Canadian literature apparent in our universities will result in further valuable graduate work being done in hitherto neglected areas of our western literature, and particularly in the period preceding the First World War.

Among Canadian journals of wider interests than *The Tamarack Review* and *Canadian Literature*, *The Canadian Forum* has best served the cause of the arts in this country. From the day of its founding in 1925 it has maintained consistently high critical standards; no student of prairie literature can afford to overlook the *Forum*'s literary essays and reviews, of which Northrop Frye's essay on A. J. M. Smith's anthology of Canadian poetry is a distinguished example.[22] ("The colonial position of Canada," Frye asserts—this in 1943—" is . . . a frostbite at the roots of the Canadian imagination." The more literal-minded among us who have survived many winters on the western plains may feel that the inhibiting frostbite originates not in any sort of mental fixation or inferiority complex, but in the simple fact of weather.)

Beyond question, one of the subtlest and most provocative examinations of the nature of prairie literature is Eli Mandel's contribution to the present series, "Images of Prairie Man." One may object to Mandel's seemingly arbitrary insistence that prairie literature is "mythic" in nature; that dialect and the tall tale are two of its dominant characteristics (when in fact they are hardly to be found outside of W. O. Mitchell's fiction and Robert Gard's curious folklore hodge-podge, *Johnny Chinook*[23]); that regional literature reflects a "child's vision of innocence, a lost Eden" (are Vaughan's "The Retreat" and Wordsworth's "Intimations" regional poems?); and that the child's "alienation from the land" (Mandel's variation of the generation gap cliché) is a characteristic *regional* theme when it is surely a commonplace of human experience dramatized in a thousand forms from the story of the Prodigal Son through Lear and Mr. Barrett of Wimpole Street to Holden Caulfield of *Catcher in the Rye?* And it may surely be argued that Gander Stake, the hero of Robert Stead's fine prairie novel, *Grain*,[24] unimaginative, inarticulate, whose vision of life encompasses a field of wheat and nothing more, is at least as representative of youthful prairie mentality as Mitchell's ultra-imaginative Kid and Brian Sean O'Connal.

Despite these possible objections to its theses, Mandel's paper remains one of the most original and stimulating in its field and deserves the widest possible circulation and critical discussion.

It is to be noted that much of our creative literature, and nearly all critical essays that appear in our literary journals, are the work of academics; and this points a possible direction of enquiry for the student of the arts in Canada. The extent and nature of the influence exercised on our literature by the academic mind and outlook, an influence which superficial examination suggests is hardly to be matched anywhere else in the western world, has never been studied in detail. One consequence may well be that since the academic mind is on the whole probably more critical than creative (a statement which itself requires investigation) our literary criticism may tend to exist in a somewhat more rarefied atmosphere than our poetry or fiction. Much of the best criticism written in the Old Country—and the best is high-level indeed—has been, and continues to be, the work not of academics but of professional men of letters, of whom Wells, Shaw, Chesterton, Spender, Amis, and Wain are representative. Whether their work smells less of the lamp and more of the market-place than that of our own critics it is outside the scope of this paper to conjecture.

What remains for the critic, the researcher to do that has not yet been done, to enable us to come to a fuller understanding of the nature of our prairie literature, its traditional and distinctive characteristics, and so to a fuller comprehension of the world of which we are a part? ("The function of the novel," says Joyce Cary, "is to help the world contemplate and understand itself.") A survey of our critical writing suggests that, while individual writers have not been badly done by (with the obvious exception of Ralph Connor who deserves a larger treatment than an article in a literary journal allows), criticism and research have left several large issues affecting the nature of our literature, and more particularly our view of it, almost untouched. Of these the most difficult of resolution concerns the definition of regional literature and the extent to which the work of our prairie writers may be so described. (Here Mandel is invaluable in suggesting lines of investigation). For it is surely apparent to the student of Canadian literature that many of our critics and literary historians tend to confuse regionalism with the frontier. (It is true, of course, that the literature of the frontier as evidenced in, say, Mark Twain's *Roughing It*[25] and Bret Harte's short stories[26] is regional, but the reverse does not necessarily hold. Hardy's Casterbridge is a far cry from Mark Twain's Carson City or Bret Harte's Mad Dog.)

One point of peculiar interest, not yet fully examined although hinted at by Mandel, concerns the extent to which our attitude to our environment, and hence the nature of our literature, has been affected by a concept of the frontier imposed from without. How many of our early settlers and writers, and particularly those of Old Country middle class background, persistently saw their prairie environment not in terms of prosaic physical reality, but as it had first been revealed to them in the pages of Butler and Ballantine and a score more travellers, explorers, novelists, poets who had written romantically of the Great Lone Land? To cite an obvious example of this possible divergence between the mind-image and the physical reality one need only mention a single word—

"Indian". It is probably true to say that for many an early prairie dweller the word conjured up, to the end of his life, a picture not of the pathetic reservation representative of a vanquished race who was a part of his familiar experience, but of the noble red man as created by James Fenimore Cooper and his imitators.

The admission of this possibility—indeed near certainty—appears to support Mandel's view that environment is a "mental construct", a "region of the human mind, a myth." This view, impressively stated, does, however, evade a fundamental truth that when all due allowances have been made for the consequences of individual idiosyncracies, the nature of art is profoundly affected by, and in part the product of, a communal mind and outlook which in their turn are shaped by many factors including race heritage, family and community conditioning, and the physical environment within which they function. To put the problem in specific terms—to what extent do such features of the physical environment as remote horizons, savage extremes of temperature, comparative isolation, and Butler's "dark inanity" dictate a communal outlook which is reflected in the literature of a region, and to what extent is that outlook determined by forces which cannot be accounted for in terms of simple physical realities? "Nature," says Northrop Frye, "is consistently sinister and menacing in Canadian poetry." Particularly so in the poetry of the prairie region. Is this because nature is in the most literal sense menacing, or because out of diverse elements, not the least of these our early reading, we have created a world of sinister forces which exists more powerfully in the mind than in physical reality?

The extent to which our literature is the product of an orthodox frontier mentality has been tentatively examined by Wilfred Eggleston,[27] but the distinction between frontier and regional, as manifest in literature, remains to be clearly drawn. Thus, dialect and the tall tale are entirely characteristic of American frontier literature, and to only a slightly lesser degree of Australian, but they play little part in the work of our better known novelists—Ross, Laurence, Grove, Ostenso, Salverson, Stead—and rarely even in that ardent frontiersman, Ralph Connor. On the other hand, although Casterbridge is indeed remote in time and place from Carson City and Red Dog, dialect and the tall tale are employed extensively by Hardy in his regional novels of the Wessex country.

The first step which must be taken towards answering the questions which must be asked before intelligent appraisal and criticism of prairie literature are possible is a detailed examination of the innumerable documents (diaries, journals, letters, community histories, newspaper files) now gathering dust in our libraries. Occasionally they are disturbed by the historian or sociologist or economist, but hardly ever by a student of our creative literature. The individual value of each document may be almost negligible, but the cumulative evidence of a substantial body of these early compositions may help us to a clearer conception of the prairie mentality, of the forces which have helped to shape it, and of the possible effect of that mentality on the re-shaping of its own environment.

Only through such explorations of root sources can we hope to come to something approaching a sympathetic understanding of our literature and ourselves.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Captain William Butler, *The Wild North Land*, London, 1873, pp. 30-31.

[2] Irene Spry, *The Palliser Expedition*, Toronto, 1963. Edward McCourt, *Remember Butler*, London and Toronto, 1967.

[3] Mary Quayle Innis, *Travellers West*, Toronto, 1956.

[4] John Maclean, *McDougall of Alberta*, Toronto, 1927.

[5] John Blackburn (ed. John Archer), *Land of Promise*, Toronto, 1971.

[6] Douglas Spettigue, *Frederick Philip Grove*, Toronto, 1970.

[7] Sinclair Ross, *As For Me and My House*, New York, 1941.

[8] Anne Marriott, *The Wind Our Enemy*, Toronto, 1939.

[9] James Gray, *The Winter Years*, Toronto, 1966.

[10] W. O. Mitchell, *Who Has Seen the Wind*, Toronto, 1947.

[11] Edward Meade, *Remember Me*, London, 1946.

[12] Henry Kreisel, *The Rich Man*, Toronto, 1948.

[13] Adele Wiseman, *The Sacrifice*, Toronto, 1956.

[14] Edward McCourt, *The Canadian West In Fiction*, Toronto, 1949 (revised edition 1970).

[15] Ray Palmer Baker, *A History of English Canadian Literature to the Confederation*, Cambridge, 1920.

[16] Edward K. Brown, *On Canadian Poetry*, Toronto, 1943.

[17] Copp Clark and McClelland & Stewart, Toronto.

[18] Ralph Gustafson, "Writing In Canada," *Northern Review*, Vol. III (Feb.-March, 1950), pp. 17-22.

[19] James Reaney, "Towards the Last Spike," *Northern Review*, Vol. VII (Summer, 1955), pp. 18-25.

[20] John Sutherland, "The Past Decade in Canadian Poetry," *Northern Review*, Vol. IV (Dec.-Jan., 1950-51), pp. 42-47.

[21] Peter Stevens, "The Development of Canadian Poetry Between the Wars and Its Reflection of Social Awareness." Unpublished thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

[22] Northrop Frye, "Canada and its Poetry," *The Canadian Forum*, Vol. XXIII, No. 275, pp. 207-210.

[23] Robert Gard, *Johnny Chinook*, New York, 1945.

[24] Robert J. C. Stead, *Grain*, New York, 1926.

[25] Mark Twain, *Roughing It*, New York, 1872.

[26] Bret Harte, *The Luck of Roaring Camp and Other Sketches*, New York, 1870.

[27] Wilfred Eggleston, *The Frontier in Canadian Letters*, Toronto, 1957.

INTERPRETATION

9

A CENTURY OF PLAIN AND PARKLAND

W. L. MORTON

I

One hundred years ago the prairies, the lands rolling upward from the Red River to the foothills of the Rockies, were primitive, with little trace of human habitation. No rut scored the sod, no furrow scarred the long roll of the prairie. The 'pitching' tracks of the Indians, the cart trails of the fur freighters were scarcely to be seen. The plains were as thousands of years of geological and climatic change had made them. Men had hardly touched them, for man himself was primitive, in that he had adapted himself to nature, and not nature to himself. The grasses flowed, the prairie fires ran in the wind; the buffalo grazed like cloud shadows in the plain; the buffalo hunt raised a flurry of dust in the diamond summer light; the rivers sought the distant sea unchecked; summer made green, autumn bronze, winter white, spring gray, the august monotony of the plains, *secula seculorum.* What had been wrought, green grass on dry grass, day on night turning, lay unchanged until it became the setting for the last frontier.

Primitive the plains were in 1867, to man at least, although the processed outcome of a majestic evolutionary logic. Yet man, the Indian, the fur trader, and the first farmers had already put the plain and parkland to their uses. But their uses were archaic, adapted to nature, and not imposed upon the orchestral rhythms of plains ecology. The plains tribes of the short grass buffalo plains had created a hunting economy and a civilisation based upon the plains' chief product, the sea-like, inexhaustible, ever-renewable buffalo herds. This they had done by means of the pound and the horse, come since 1740 to the Canadian plains, and the buffalo skin teepee, the easy product of the herds. Few men have ever known an ampler adaptation to what nature had prepared; few men have known, in a life of endless challenge, a greater security, a more conscious independence.

Whom Catlin, Parkman, and Kane have drawn, let no man attempt to sketch. More apt to this theme is the neo-archaic uses to which the fur trader and the settler had put the plains by 1867. To the fur trade the

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plains were chiefly the source of provisions, the dried meat and pemmican that were the produce of the buffalo hunt. His provision posts—also fur trading posts, for there were few absolutes in practice—lined the fringe of prairie and forest from Fort Garry by the Qu'Appelle posts and Carlton to Edmonton. In them the spoils of the buffalo hunt by the semi-Indian *métis*, the dried meat and pemmican of the summer hunts, the fresh meat of the fall hunt, were stored in warehouses and frozen in ice-cellars. In the plains provisions was the margin of safety for the posts, the boat brigades of the forest rivers, the cart brigades of the prairie trails. The slow winter collection, the long summer freighting, of furs rested firmly on the provisions afforded by the plains. The fur trade, no less than the plains tribes, depended on the stomachs of the buffalo churning grass to flesh.

So also did the Woods tribes pressing on to the plains, much as the white poplar ran its sub-surface shoots beneath the sod, to rise in green-gold bluffs across the northern plains. The parkland was a zone of conflict, swaying to and fro with the wet and dry seasons, between the grasses and the poplars, the prairie fires and the sloughs, the Plains Indians and the Woods until in the neo-archaic age the gun from the East gave the Woods tribes an advantage that carried the Crees onto the Plains and the Assiniboines to the Rockies.

Even where agriculture appeared, in the river-lots of the Red and the Assiniboine, and in the gardens of the fur posts, it never escaped from the neo-archaic to the modern. Not only was agriculture introduced to the plains by fugitive peasants from the Scots Highlands and the "freemen" from the seigneuries of Quebec; it had to adapt its slovenly methods, its traditional practices, to the short summer, variable rainfall, and the neo-archaic economy of the plains. The farmer grew what he could; he might sell, for want of transport, only to the fur trade. Potatoes and vegetables served the local market, wheat flour and butter the fur posts, Mandan corn and cattle his own table. For him, too, there was no escape from the still prevailing ecology of the plains. Even his wheat was but a superior prairie grass, thriving only as it could face the swift prairie summers, and use the long hours of a burning northern sun.

The prairies until 1867 therefore remained, at most neo-archaic. They remained, for modern civilisation, a virgin *tabula rasa*, a blank sheet with no writing, an unmarked parchment, unscraped, unoiled, unprepared.

Only in the community of Red River did a transition from the neo-archaic to the modern occur. Fort Garry, grown into Winnipeg, is perhaps the only organic community in the West which has a continuous and unbroken growth from the old times before 1867 to the new. Edmonton might have been such a community, but is not, because its remoteness caused a break between its neo-archaic past and its modern being. It is, like all other prairie communities, one created *de novo* from the virgin prairie.

The plains remained archaic and neo-archaic until a century ago because they were even more isolated then than the Arctic North is today. They were to be reached only by the Hudson's Bay Company's annual ship to York Factory, or the occasional canoe coming in summer from Fort William, or by the cart brigades creaking their slow way from St. Paul in summer and autumn, when the prairie grass fed the ponies. That, and the odd courier or traveller marching by toboggan or cariole to St. Paul. From the Pacific across the mountains little came, for the Pacific before the Panama Canal was an outlet rather than an inlet to the West. The prairie region was, therefore, not integrated with the continent, but rather by sea with the British Isles—a reminder the prairies were, to a degree are still, a maritime rather than a continental hinterland.

The isolation, however, was ended by 1867. Not only had Lorin Blodget with his *Climatology of North America*, and Hind and Palliser by their expeditions, ended the myth of the sub-arctic character of prairie climate; the new route to St. Paul had since 1844 been drawing the West into the pattern of continental integration. Beyond St. Paul lay the network of rivers, canals, and railways that was making North America a trading unit. The volume of the St. Paul trade, after the admission of free trade in furs throughout the southeastern prairies by the outcome of the Sayer trial in 1849, drew the West towards the American Union and the modern period. Continental integration had begun; the isolation of the prairies was ending; the coming of modern civilisation, the railway, the town, agriculture and industry, was inevitable. The already apparent dwindling of the buffalo herds was only an anticipation, historically apt, biologically sad, of what was inevitable.

Such matters were not, however, only economic and ecological; they were also political. The beginning of the integration of the prairies into the continental pattern was one of the principal causes of Confederation. The jarring Canadas and the about to be depressed Maritimes could face the future neither in their existing state, nor even in a united future, unless they had a hinterland for expansion. The lands to the north afforded none; the shorelines and fisheries of the Gulf of St. Lawrence little, only the prairies offered the expansion that was necessary to union. Confederation was, therefore, in part only, but also in essential fact, a prelude and preparation for the annexation of the prairies to the Canadian version of continental integration.

Nothing seemed more easy, once Confederation had been arranged. An eagerly acquiescent Britain was only too impatient to devolve upon the new Confederation its unwanted title to the northern half of the continent, including the fertile prairies. Canada, accustomed to dealing with Britain, but not with the West, calmly prepared the transfer in London, forgetting that it had also to be accomplished on the banks of the Red and the Saskatchewan. The result was the resistance by the *Métis*, and, indeed, to some degree, by all the native people of the West, to being transferred unconsulted. The resistance, however, was headed by the *Métis*, the people who were the most distinct and the most excitable of the neo-archaic Westerners. That their missionaries feared civilisation for their flock, that their leader, Louis Riel, was of almost pure French blood and educated in Quebec, meant that Western resistance found an ally in French-Canadian ultramontane nationalism. The diplomatic situation, combined with the Canadian winter and the straitness of the Winnipeg gateway to the West, gave their resistance a weight neither their own numbers, nor the importance of their cause merited. The integration of the West with Confederation had nevertheless to be made on terms with its neo-archaic past. The result was the province of Manitoba, in its political form a Canadian province but in substance a neo-archaic and organic community—crudely put, a half breed reserve. Itself a gateway between East and West, it was also a gateway between the past and future, the archaic and the modern.

As a Canadian province, however, it had itself no justification; it was a concession to the past and to French missionary interests. It was not so much to set the patterns of integration into Confederation as to have itself to conform to that pattern as it emerged. The creation of Manitoba served its purposes; it opened the gateway to the West and preserved the West for "the purposes of the Dominion." The political preparations had been made for the replacement of the neo-archaic by the modern.

II

Modern civilisation came to the plains and parkland in the 1870's, but in a specific form, that of Ontario settlement. The next generation was to be dominated by the introduction of the institutions and moves of Ontario into the prairies. A solid body of agricultural practice, a sharp commercial sense, a rigidly utilitarian approach to life, excessive caution, and a dour self-depreciation—these were new things on the prairies and they were to be the spirit in which the prairies were civilised.

It was true that Ontario was not to have it all its own way in the next decade, nor, indeed, did it desire to do so. There was still the ethnic duality of Manitoba until 1890, and something of the same was to survive in the Territories and the later provinces. The new settlers brought with them a core of idealism, based on their religious faiths and their agrarian experience, which looked to found a new and juster society for plain people. This idealism was the core of organizations such as the Farmers' Union, the Patrons of Industry, and of men like the Ontario-born E. A. Partridge and J. S. Woodsworth. They were not to find their reward in the immediate future, but were to mark the farther future when allies arrived. In the short run, as marked in the passage of the Manitoba School Act, the Ontario immigrants were to impose the harsher side of their character on the civilising of the plains.

Their influences, democratic, rational, and utilitarian, were vastly reinforced by the coming of the railway. Not only did the St. Paul and Manitoba end the long isolation of the West by the southern plains route in 1878, and the Canadian Pacific by the Lakes route in 1882; the railway, by crossing the plains from Winnipeg to the Rockies, both ended the neo-archaic cart and boat brigades by the northern route and also made the plains one as they had not been before.

The old union of provisions plains and fur forest continued, of course, but ceased to be the dominant pattern of the West. The West was both integrated into and subdued to the continental structure of the new Canada. Ontario had largely provided the drive and credit for the creation of Confederation, even if the construction of the railway had fallen to Montrealers like Stephen and Smith; so now Ontario people themselves were settling the prairies and giving them Ontario institutions, making them the extension of Ontario just as the northern tier of states was an expansion of New England.

The process was, of course, a complex one. It was not a matter of railway construction and the spread of settlement. Just as in Manitoba the neo-archaic, allied with the political weight of Quebec, had left its traces in the Manitoba Act, so the advance across the prairies had to encounter and deal with the relics of the neo-archaic. With the Indians, the treaty regime won a success from the Lake of the Woods to the Rockies that was a tribute, scarcely to be adequately valued, to the diplomacy of the Canadian government, and to the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, of the missionaries and of the long traditions of Indian friendship with the Crown. But in those arch-representatives of the neo-archaic, the *Métis*, the policy of pacification and compensation met disaster. The compromise of the Manitoba Act, with the acceptance of French institutions and the French language, and the land grants to the *Métis*, had failed to settle those semi-nomadic people. Many had trekked to the Saskatchewan. In this respect, as in that of French institutions, the Manitoba Act had failed before 1890, so that it is little wonder that the Ontario settlers came to regard it as devoid of practical meaning.

That failure is, perhaps, the explanation, although not a justification, of the Saskatchewan Rebellion. The successful resistance of 1870, and its compromise of the fears of the old order and the needs of the new, had not stilled those fears. The coming of the railway and the failure of the buffalo herds, each a tremendous portent in the life of the plains, could only inflame the dark broodings of the hunter and the tripman whose traditional way of life was crumbling. Something of this kind explains the Rebellion, a purely neo-archaic rising, not at first united, as that of

1869 was, with French nationalism, but which was united with that ferment later only by the accidents of Quebec and Ontario politics.

Because the rising of the Saskatchewan *Métis* and the Plains Crees was incomplete, it was easily crushed. The hanging of Riel was a symbol only of the end of the neo-archaic on the prairies; the Rebellion at bottom had nothing to do, as the Red River resistance had, with the relations of the English and French in Canada, although it had much to do with the subsequent, and novel separation of the Indian and the *Métis* from the main stream of Canadian life.

The result of the Rebellion, then, was both the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the further political integration of the prairies into Confederation, with the grant of representation to the Territories in Parliament.

As in politics, the prairies were also being integrated into Canadian agriculture, but by adaption rather than by extension of known practices. In Manitoba, the Ontario and the French farmers had brought modern methods for the day. Apart from difficulties in obtaining mould-boards that would scour in the prairie gumbo, in finding wood and fuel for fences, and in procuring water on the plains, there were few adaptations to be made. American priairie experience, in fact, furnished the remedies for most difficulties in the chilled steel mould-board, barbwire, and the windmill.

As the farmers moved westward with the railway to the second prairie steppe, however, the some time hazards of old Manitoba, frost and drought, became more marked. The farmers were forced to turn, particularly in the dry years of the middle eighties, to agricultural science and to novel adaptations. Dryland farming made its beginning with the use of summer fallow, the short season crop with the introduction of Red Fife. Agricultural science appeared in the West with the founding of the Brandon Experimental Station in 1886. The advance onto the plains, led by the spearhead of the Canadian Pacific Railway, had begun on the broad front of settlement, to Indian Head, to Regina, until the dusty core of Palliser's Triangle was reached, and the farming front advancing from the east was stopped by the ranching front advancing from the south. The farmer and the cowman were to be neighbours until the next generation.

The Ontario immigration, however, failed to fill the prairies at the pace the development of national policy required. Expansive as Ontario had been, great as was its head of popular steam, the opening of the West, the demands of new industries, and the drain of population to the United States, reduced the pressure and drew off its surplus farmers' sons. In addition the prolonged depression from 1882 to 1896 shrank the whole economy and froze people in their places, however unattractive. Security, however bleak, was preferred to adventure certain to be unrewarding.

Ontario, even with the help of the Maritimes and Quebec, the Icelanders and the Mennonites, had failed to settle the prairies. From its beach-head in Manitoba, it had occupied, it had not peopled them.

It had, however, given them its institutions, after 1890 even in Manitoba, and decisively, despite the vestigial separate schools of the Territories. Yet even these institutions were to fail. The county vanished from Manitoba, disintegrating into the rural municipality. The towns mostly became tank towns; those that throve, market towns at best; local industries were few and struggling, most to perish. Only the local school district possessed the vitality of its Ontario model.

Moreover, the great assertion of Ontario democracy, the Manitoba School Act, disastrously affected the national institutions of Canada. Accidental as the duality of Manitoba was, it was not the less historically valid for being accidental—what, in history, is not to some degree? Even the accidents rested on historical elements too little studied by the more pontifical of Canadian historians. Furthermore, it offered an opportunity for French participation with English Canadians in settling the West. It was an opportunity that the French, despite the heroic efforts of Taché and his fellow bishops, failed to take, turning rather to the sterile wastes of the Gaspé and the Laurentides, or to the Ontario side of the Ottawa and the mills of Massachusetts. The maintenance by the Privy Council of the School Act completed the already far advanced destruction by judicial process of the national constitution of 1867. Thus the imposition of Ontario's character on Manitoba replaced the original constitution by the federal structure in which the provinces had risen to a provincial and popular sovereignty little imagined in 1867. This backlash from the prairies had now reduced the federal government of Canada to the paralysis of today.

III

The settlement of the West by the Ontario migration, then, had brought the institutions of civilisation to the prairies, law, police, agriculture, commerce, education. It had incorporated the West into the political structure of Canada. Yet it had failed either to people the plains or to create a civilisation adapted to the character of the plains. Neither had it incorporated the new society into the old in a way congenial to the character of the old.

The failure had always been described as an essentially superficial one, an economic failure caused by the great depression of the 1880's and 1890's. That, however, was only an aggravation of the deeper failure caused by the fact that the settlement of the prairies was attempted in the main by only one province, and in a provincial, not a federal, and in one sense not a national, way. Moreover, the failure was not only a failure to people, it was a failure to adapt. Only in its initial and incomplete settlement, and in its political institutions, was the West an off-shoot of Ontario. The final and fundamental task of creating a civilisation suitable to the character of the plains and parklands had only been begun, and had largely still to be done.

It cannot be said, either, that it was to be done by the next immigration, the vast Amero-European influx of the next generation. Such an influx had always been sought, and with special urgency and direct appeal since the early 1890's. Immigration from Europe and the United States, however, reached no significant volume until the end of that decade, when, by reason of the ending of the supply of free land in the United States, the Canadian West became a real alternative, the only successor of the American West. The new immigration when it began, however, neither carried on or amplified what the Ontario immigration had done. Neither did it as much, except to a degree through the American settler, carry significantly further the process of adaptation to Western conditions begun in the 1880's. What it did do, however, was first to introduce new social and popular assumptions into the process of settlement, and then encounter and contend with, in a far more creative struggle, the basic conditions of prairie settlement. By the end of the generation, in 1927, the prairie civilisation in temper and institutions had been established, if not tested.

The characteristics of the new settlers who produced these changes are readily discernible. The Americans, although often returning Canadians or their sons, carried with them that curious American trait of readily accepting strange institutions and customs while remaining quietly and consciously American. They thus made excellent settlers, as everyone agreed; they did not challenge the Canadian institutions of the West, as many feared. They did, however, preserve, on the one hand, a latent republicanism with their family and business ties with the States, not a revolutionary republicanism but a republican simplicity, and, on the other, a deep doubt of the utility of politics and the state, except as an occasional convenience. This scepticism, when combined with their quiet refusal to accept the whole spirit of Canadian politics, including Canadian political parties, helped prepare the way for the later independence of national political parties, and the final apolitical outlook of many prairie people.

Equally, if not more important, was their contribution of a generation of agricultural experience of dryland farming on the plains, of third party movements and of agrarian politics. They were to reinforce heavily the agrarianism first experienced in the West by the Farmers' Union in the 1880's and the Patrons of Industry in the 1890's, the least noted and most important attempts of the Ontario migration to meet the needs of western settlement, although they, too, were failures.

The European immigrants were more various than the American, and some were less prepared for the conditions of prairie settlement. Some, of course, were not; the Ukrainians from the Carpathian foothills found a familiar habitat in the parklands; the Russians and Russo-Germans, one on the prairies. Despite their variety, they also possessed certain common traits.

One was their strong national—or group—persistence. For the Germans, this was an old characteristic. Ausland Deutsch in central and eastern Europe had always preserved their identity by group settlement, by following family rather than commercial, private rather than political, lives. The central Europeans, particularly the Austrian Ukrainians, were usually extraordinary examples of an unrealized, and therefore especially dear nationality. To that coherent bond was added the strangeness in Canadian experience of Slavonic speech, and the use of the vernacular by the churches of the Greek rite. They, too, by group settlement and preoccupation with farming persisted in their own ways, and either avoided political life, or joined it on their own terms to promote their interests as groups. They could better, therefore, fit into a new pattern of civilisation to which they had made a contribution rather than be assimilated to an old and only partly established one.

One strange and very different strain some of them brought with them, that of Social Democratic ideas. While most were conservative and withdrawn from political life, a few were politically active and liberal, some part were active and convinced Social Democrats, holders of the only political conviction other than Populism that had been meaningful to the Central and Eastern European peasant and intellectual. Thus, they brought one additional factor to impede association with the political parties and acceptance of the Ontario ideal of the classless, middle class farming community served by professionals, business people, and workmen of essentially the same outlook. It was one more pebble to add to the weight against accepting the established parties and the building of a conventional Canadian society on the prairies.

The third group, the British, though politically so germane to the older settlement of the prairies, was in fact, even more various and more difficult to define than the American and the European immigrants. English, Irish, Scots, and Welsh, they were not any more than the others to be brought under one sufficient definition. Two characteristics were, however, of importance in the context of the settlement of the prairies at the beginning of this century. One is, perhaps, best called chauvinism. They were the children, after all, of the hectic imperialism of late Victorian and Edwardian times. Being British, the last thing they expected was to be assimilated in a British colony—a sad, if natural, misreading of the true nature of Canada. They, therefore, constituted another drag on assimilation to the Ontario establishment on the prairies, including in some cases the established political parties. The latter trait occurred because a good number of them were Labour people, and even Socialists, who found little welcome for their ideas in Canadian society or in Canadian politics. Not actually allies of the Social Democrats, they had the same effect of challenging the existing political conventions. Among them, were founders of the Labour Party and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.

Such were the three great strains of the new immigration that was to make the West for almost two generations, until the immigration after the last war, significantly different in its population from the rest of Canada. Such were the characteristics of the people who, imposed on the Ontario settlement, were to contribute to the formation of the character and spirit of western Canadian civilisation. Had these three great strains anything in common other than land hunger and a desire for a new life?

It may be that they had. Two things at least were common to all. One was the desire to escape the closing of the frontier in the United States and the fragmentation of land holdings in Europe—the same thing—and the poverty and recurrent unemployment of the great industrial cities of an England that had passed its economic prime. The second was, perhaps, less widely common, certainly it is far more difficult to define, because it was a matter of the spirit. It was the hope that the West might be a practical, a really viable, utopia. Utopianism the first half of the nineteenth century had seen, and it was readily definable as the result of certain religious or socialist ideas. The sources of the utopianism in the West, at the beginning of this century, are less discernible. The Socialist dream was part of it; so was the semi-scientific literature of H. G. Wells and writers influenced by him. But something of it was native to Canadian democracy, the democratic dream that men might be free and independent, particularly, as transmitted by the young women who taught school in Ontario and the West. But whatever its origins, it was a fact, however curious, in a society commercial and utilitarian, and the most important fact in the creation of the civilisation of the West. Without it, men would not have toiled and ventured as they did.

The West, however, was more than people. The people, old and new, used the land to produce what the land and climate were specially qualified to produce, hard spring wheat. The successor to prairie grass and the buffalo was wheat and beef, as the freight trains were successors to the cart brigades. The wheat economy replaced the buffalo economy; the plains fed, not the fur trade, but the industrial cities overseas. This vast, monolithic economy, however, although tied now to a trade in necessities rather than luxuries, to bread, not fur, was as vulnerable to hazards of climate and market as the old was to the vagaries of fashion and price, the equally to the costs of transport. The West, transformed, was still the West, distant and mono-economic. What buffers could be devised, what bulwarks built, against the crushing impact of drought, frost and depression.

Nor could such a see-saw economy, now up, now down, endure the tortures of depression as well as a more diversified society. Neither were its people disposed to do so. There was a strong disposition rather to try radical measures. Not only was there the American influence of the International Workers of the World, and the West's own reaction to it and to Canadian unionism in the One Big Union; there was, also, the growth of non-partisanship, or apoliticalism, fed by the agrarian strains from Ontario and the States, and by the political experience of the Territories. From the beginning of the century there was much social ferment, both in the great shipping centres, the cities, and in the rapidly filling stretches of the country.

From the ferment came the great agrarian organization of the Grain Growers, and after the shock of the First World War, the Farmers' Unions, the Progressive Party, and the Wheat Pools. Out of it came the Winnipeg General Strike, the West's one world-rippling event; and out of the strike the Labour Party and Labour members of Parliament, some Ontario-born, most of British birth.

In that tremendous generation, a generation of fierce action and hard decisions, the West with heavy strokes forged its own institutions, declared its own identity, and created its own sense of semi-political independence. It affirmed its own newly discovered and deeply felt sense of novelty. Its people had realized that the West was indeed a clean sheet on which a new story might be written. The West was no longer attempting to be Ontario on the prairies, it had declared its spiritual independence; it was persuaded of its own difference.

IV

The West then had formed and discovered itself by 1927, and half a century from Confederation. The open prairie, the bluff-strewn parkland, had been incised like a vast copper bowl into squares and triangles by railway and road allowances, embossed and punctuated by the red phalli of grain elevators and railway tanks. The stopping points had been determined and the roads opened for the crawling grain wagons and the brisk Tin Lizzies. The provincial legislatures were farmer-dominated, and "Wheat Pool" and "Saskatchewan Co-operative" matched the Winnipeg and Vancouver grain company names in the stiff parade of elevators by the long sidings. The farmer and labour revolt of the post-war years had fruited in the peculiarly Western institutions of the farmers' apolitical, non-partisan parties and the great producers' co-operatives.

On this enormous achievement of a decade, not yet settled into place, not yet hardened in use and routine, fell the tremendous blows of the great depression and drought of 1929 to 1939. The shattering disillusion of those events are forogtten except by the now aging survivors. In perspective, two things seem to emerge above all others. The first was that the depression and the drought completed the revolt of the West against the imported and the conventional. The old economic institutions and habits of thought were condemned and had to be discarded. The West, if it was to be, had to be what it was shaping itself to be; there was no going back on the revolutionary post-war decade. The second was that the West was nearly destroyed by the combination of drought and depression, and perhaps could not have survived by itself. It was saved, and it is sobering thought for Westerners, by the federal government.

A third event, perhaps more important in the long run, but less evident and ambiguous, lay in the field of agricultural practice. The considerable beginnings of power farming and the mechanization of agriculture was delayed by the depression; capital was not available for the purchase of tractors and machinery. The drought forced an acceleration and increase of the adaptation of tillage practices to prairie conditions. Strip farming, the replacement of the plough by the disc, tree-planting, are only examples of the ecological revolution in prairie agriculture.

Closely related in governmental and economic practice was a fourth change, the use of government—federal, be it noted again—to provide the back-stop necessary if the farmers were to survive drought and crop failure until the rains came again. The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act and the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, with the restoration of the Wheat Board, placed the stability and skills of government behind the farmer gambling with the unpredictable chances of an area of marginal rainfall and of a world market. The last two measures were, of course, that blend of government stability and independent individual action and individual payment for service that the western farmer and his allies, the prairie townsmen, had desired. The legislation might be federal, the spirit and the concept were Western.

Definitely national, however, was the governmental action that set about the salvaging of the institutions and public finances of the West. The Bank of Canada's studies and the Royal Commission on Federal-Provincial Relations (Rowell-Sirois) were in large part a response to the practical dereliction of the West. Thus, the West, independent in spirit but of federal creation, largely set in train that revival of federal power, which the Second World War increased, and which led to the federal-provincial equalization payments of 1947. This was the long delayed national answer to the West's protest against the unequal incidence of the National Policy of east-west transportation and the protective tariff.

By such ambivalent logic did the West escape from the decade of drought and depression. It remained, however, restless and radical in its political attitudes; became, indeed, more independent than ever of conventional Canadian politics in Saskatchewan and Alberta. In Manitoba, the outcome of the farmers' revolt of 1920, the Bracken Government, remained in power. That it did so was an indication that even relatively conservative Manitoba had come to set reasonably good administration above the excitement, and possible abuses, of conventional parliamentary government by parties. The Bracken Government was not only without politics; it was even without ideas. It turned back the new political movements of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and Social Credit, but the strains it suffered in doing so forced it slowly towards that catch-all of Canadian politics, the Liberal party. With Bracken's departure to federal politics in 1942, it became, in effect, a Liberal party, in wartime coalition. Manitoba, as the gateway to the West, as it was still in spirit, could not too boldly adopt the new movements by which the West was to express itself.

That fell to the other provinces to do. In Saskatchewan, latent nonpartisanship and overt economic distress finally drove the electorate to return the C.C.F. to power, although not until 1944. The C.C.F., organized in 1932, had sought national rather than provincial office. It had incorporated the persons, the ideas and the hopes of the agrarian and labour movements of the 1920's. These had shown themselves in all provinces, especially Ontario, but they had remained centred in the prairie West, where the basic radicalism and the hope of novelty gave the movement its origin and natural home. But the provincial victory in Saskatchewan was not so much a victory for a socialist or even a radical party as of prairie apoliticism, the determination to throw off conventional shackles and make government the direct administrative agent of the people. The school teacher leaders might experiment in socialism but their essential work was to use the provincial government positively to meet the expressed needs of the people. This was an old Canadian tradition, and especially, a western one.

Apparently much less in the Canadian tradition, but actually very much so, and even more expressive of the peculiar traditions of the West, was the Social Credit movement. The tidal spread of that doctrine over Alberta in the early 1930's was, of course, one more incoming of the perennial revolt of the debtor community against the creditor. That it should have come on the parkland frontier of the West and in the greatest depression and drought in North American history was not in the least surprising. That it should have allied itself readily with religious fundamentalism was not surprising either, for the debtor is more likely than the creditor to be a fundamentalist.

What is surprising is that the Social Credit doctrine should have jumped, like an erratic electrical charge, from its place of fermentation in England to Alberta. Social Credit was, as a study of its origin reveals, an attempt to deal with the problem of distribution in an industrial economy by means of changes in the concept and use of credit rather than by political revolution. From this came its appeal to many religious people, and still more to benevolent intellectuals, particularly those with no economic or political training. It was its essentially non-partisan, apolitical character that formed the links with Alberta quite as much as its appeal to a debtor community. Hence, C. B. Macpherson was only partly right—gave only the first stroke of the scalpel that was to open the way to truth—when he called it a "quasi-party." It was, in fact, not a political party at all; it was an apolitical—or anti-political—movement.

When Social Credit was returned to power in 1935, it demanded, at bottom, good administration by honest men who were by profession and practice *not* politicians. Social Credit could, therefore, give the community what use it required of the state while keeping state action limited. It thus combined social use of the state with free enterprise. The West, therefore, acquired in the administration of Alberta the reconciliation of state action with free enterprise—the individual firm and business concern working in an institutional environment that the West had been seeking for a generation and which Alberta itself has now enjoyed for a generation. It is, at the moment, impossible to see any end, except in gross incompetence, to an administration which perfectly reflects an anti-political community. Social Credit was the end of politics in Alberta; it was the beginning of popular administration. The general will of Jean-Jacques Rousseau had been realized and implemented. May I be at the learned conference in the next world where that vindicated philosopher and Mr. Manning meet!

Thus, despite the differences of the three provincial regimes, from 1935 to 1958, (when party government returned to Manitoba) the West was largely an anti-political community. Something of the vast monotony of the grasslands prevailed in its public life.

That extraordinary harmony of public and private life was increased by the balancing of the tariff by the equalization grants, by the wartime and postwar prosperity. Prosperity made possible the delayed triumph of machine-powered agriculture, a triumph redoubled by the use of artificial fertilizers and a long succession of years of abundant or sufficient rain. In this prosperity, the new ecology of agriculture and institutional life with the basic conditions of the plains came to its full development. The process was re-inforced by the state reshaped as the state assistant and ancillary to free enterprise, a role which could be easily expanded in the less prosperous provinces—in Saskatchewan by the C.C.F. government, and in Manitoba even under a party government. The second decade of the period 1927 to 1947 saw the forming of institutions and the firming of conventions by which the West had succeeded in expressing its own needs and aspirations.

V

The last twenty years of the past century, then, from 1948 to the present were years of fulfilment in the civilisation of the West. They saw the maturing of the wheat economy, a maturity relieved of its earlier dependence on the narrow and uncertain markets in the wheat-growing countries of Europe by the beginning of large, long term sales to markets in Asia. The West, by the fact, ceased to be an economic colony of Europe in political subordination to Eastern Canada. In the Saskatchewan Dam the scientific agricultural economy of the prairies developed its working symbol, a symbol also of that rural electrification which gave abundant power to rural and to urban industry.

The years also—how neat it is that 1947 should also be the year of the Leduc oil strike!—saw the enormous broadening of the primary economy of the West, first by the oil and gas discoveries, and then by the beginning of potash mining in Saskatchewan. To a basic food stuff, the West now added basic sources of power and of food growing. The West, by these accessions to its developed resources carried further its integration with the continental and the world economy.

The same process of broadening and deepening the foundations of the West's ecological economy and institutions went on in the service industries, trucking, marketing, manufacturing. The monolithic wheat economy was not buttressed by a wide perimeter of associated industries, recalling the subdued diversity of the majestic monotony of the plains.

From their fulfilment of a way of life, partly groped for, partly foreseen, came a revival of that sense of independence in association which had always marked the West in its Canadian role. Federally created, the West was self-defined. Always mindful of its creator and salvation, the West knew in its bones that it was an independent creature which had determined its own life within known and accepted limits. Even the return of party politics in federal Manitoba public life under Conservative leadership was only an assertion, necessitated in its expression by federal and provincial needs, of the West's essentially anti-political character — expressed as in Quebec by bloc voting—and of the assistant and developmental character of the Western provincial state, carried further by the party government of Duff Roblin than by any other western administration.

It is easy, therefore, to see in the West today the emergence of a distinctive civilisation—a sub-civilisation, to speak with some preciseness. What are the characteristics of that way of life?

The first is its obvious and deliberate ecological character. Agricultural technics and political administration have been purposefully reduced to complete co-operation by scientific research and instruction and by an usually wide and deep diffusion of political power in western society. Simple in both social and economic structure, the West is a striking example of the adaptation of ideas, institutions and social aspirations to the limits and potentialities of a distinctive environment.

The second is the apolitical, or even anti-political, character of its public life. This development began in the assertion of the sectional needs of the West; it found fullest expression in Alberta through Social Credit as a medium of expression of religious fundamentation, sectionalism, and the sense of novelty, of the possibility of new beginnings.

The third characteristic is the reduction of government to administration, and of the state to the role of assistant and ancillary to individual and community enterprise and development. As the settler had to come to terms with the plains, so the state had to come to terms with the voter. The dignity of government is much diminished, its utility greatly increased.

These three things, the ecological community, the anti-political society, the ancillary state, are the three chief features of the century long development of civilisation in the West. These distinguish it; what gave it its special character in Canadian history at least, was the sense of novelty, the belief that the prairies were a *tabula rasa*. Does that sense remain? To attempt an answer would be to pass from the revelation of the past proper to the historian to the criticism of the present proper to the publicist. Perhaps one may, as a layman, remark that in a civilisation as materialistic as that of the West, and as prone to smugness in success as any other community, there still remains place for a sense that new beginnings are possible also in the art and taste that are the bloom of civilisation.

10

ADAPTIVE STRATEGY AND PROCESSES IN THE CANADIAN PLAINS

JOHN W. BENNETT

This paper arises out of a research project, the Saskatchewan Cultural Ecology Research Program, which was conceived in 1960 - 61, got under way in 1962, and completed its field work in 1971. Two books have been published on the study, one on the Hutterite colonies in the southwestern part of the province (Stanford University Press 1967). The second, entitled *Northern Plainsmen*, on the research program as a whole, was published in 1969 by Aldine Publishing Company. A third volume on the social organization and ecology of the ranching and farming populations is in preparation. A number of articles have appeared already and there are more to come.

The study took place in a five-thousand square mile area of the southwestern part of the province of Saskatchewan, a region we call "Jasper," after the fictitious name for its provincial service-center town. We attempted to study all of the relevant economic, occupational, and ethnic groups in that area. We were not entirely successful, of course, but we did sample all of them, and studied the important ones in detail. The study was designed largely as an attempt to apply some of the notions of cultural ecology (which anthropologists have developed in research on tribal and peasant peoples around the world) to contemporary agrarian society. The chief problem was to take into account the external social, political, and economic inputs. Most cultural ecology research done by anthropologists has been done without important reference to the larger external society, its institutional system, the national economic market, and other influences on the local economy and society of modern agrarians. Therefore we had to modify the anthropological approach in order to take account of these influences. We had four groups that we paid particular attention to: the Hutterites; a Cree Indian Reserve; the farming population; and the ranching population. The last two, of course, are primarily occupational groups; the first two, ethnic communities.

The subject is perhaps best introduced by referring to several diagrams. The first, Diagram A, showing relationships between environment and types of farming, suggests why, from a cultural ecology point of view, western Canada is an extraordinarily interesting place. In other words, the correlations between natural resources and certain socio-cultural features (in this case, various types of soils, farming, size of farm enter-

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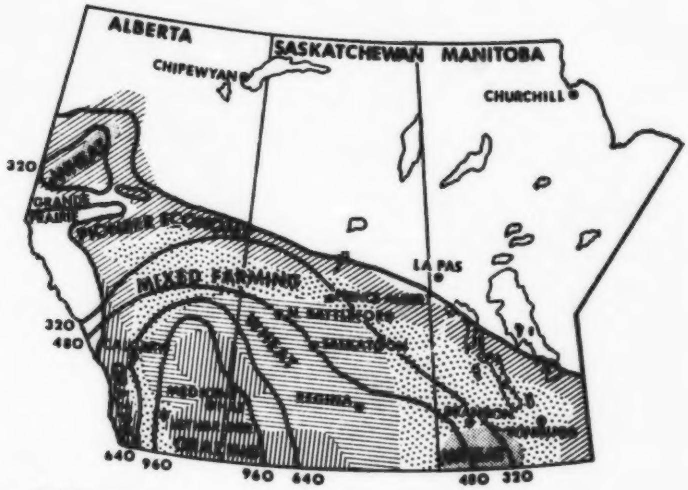
ALBERTA
SASKATCHEWAN
MANITOBA
CHIPEWYAN
CHURCHILL
320
GRANDE PRAIRIE
PIONEER ECONOMY
LA PAS
MIXED FARMING
N. BATTLEFORD
320
480
SASKATOON
REGINA
MEDICINE HAT
640
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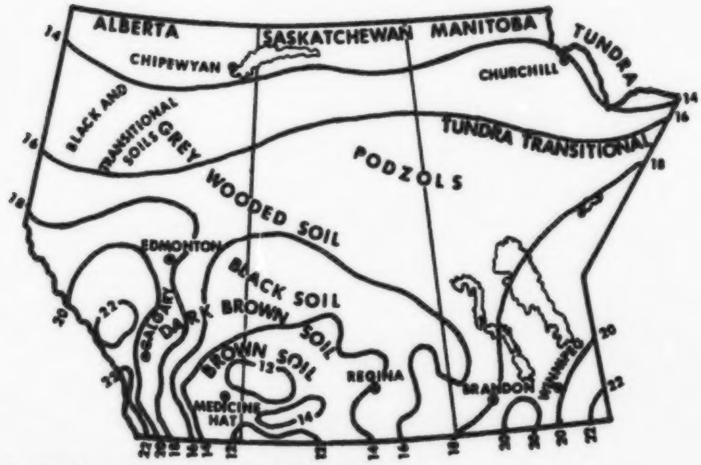
960
640
480
320

a. *Soil Types*


ALBERTA
SASKATCHEWAN
MANITOBA
TUNDRA
14
CHIPEWYAN
CHURCHILL
14
16
BLACK AND TRANSITIONAL SOILS
GREY WOODED SOIL
16
TUNDRA TRANSITIONAL
PODZOLS
18
18
EDMONTON
BLACK SOIL
CALGARY
DARK BROWN SOIL
20
22
BROWN SOIL
12
REGINA
BRANDON
WINNIPEG
20
22
MEDICINE HAT
14
22

b. Modes of Agricultural Production

A. Soil Types and Modes of Agricultural Production on the Canadian Plains.

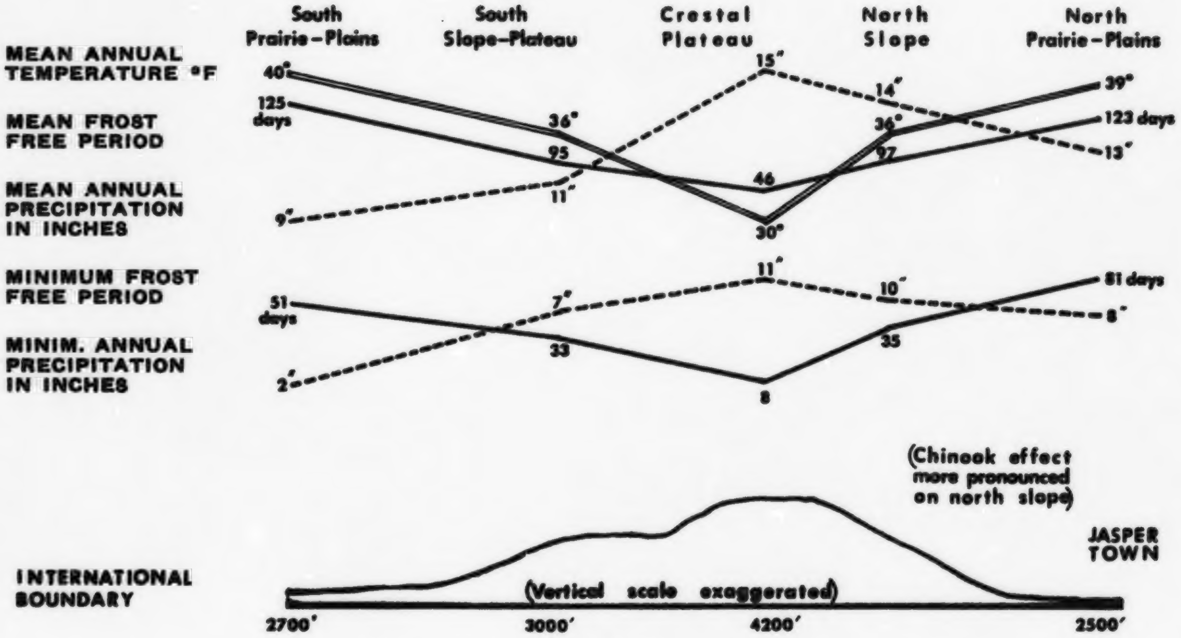
From: *Atlas of Canada*, Dept. of Mines & Technical Surveys, Ottawa, 1957; and Donald F. Putnam and others, *Canadian Regions*, New York, 1952.

prise acreage), is close and accurate, and provides a set of built-in problems.

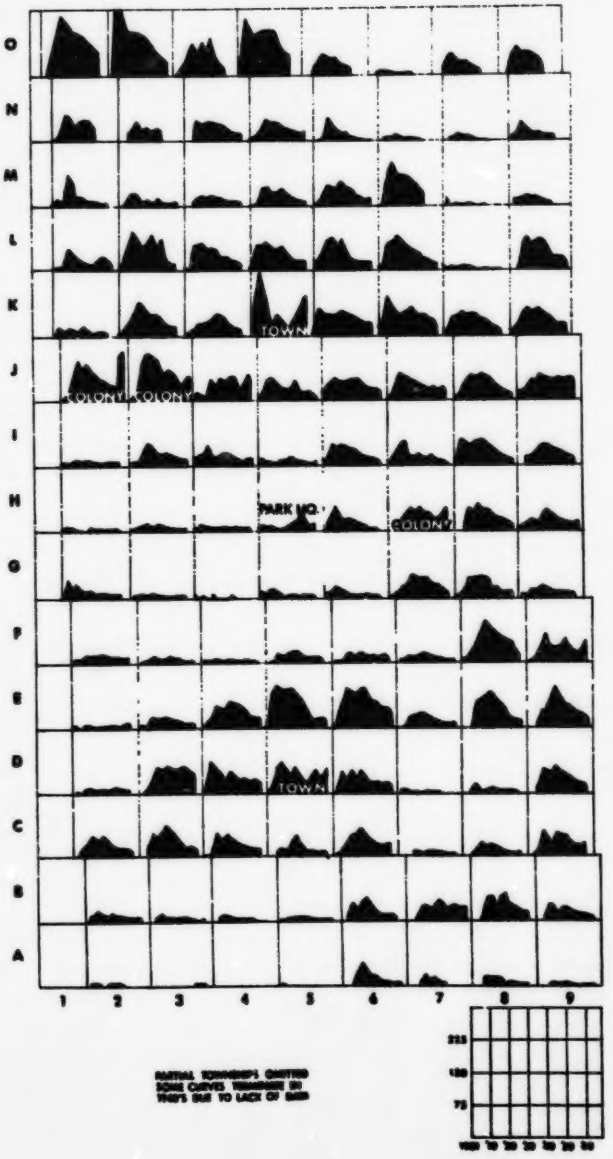
The region centering on the Cypress Hills was selected partly because of its universal character: all over the North American West, from south to north, one finds topography like this. It is a classic profile, described by John Wesley Powell in his famous 1879 treatise on the arid lands of the United States. His sketch of the future of these arid lands was based upon his understanding of this kind of topography. It is characterized by high-lands where rainfall or precipitation generally is greater than on the lower plains. The water runs down the slopes and is available for various kinds of agricultural purposes on the plains providing there is suitable development. Powell made recommendations for land tenure schemes which would have involved access to these unequally-distributed resources. This constitutes the principal problem of this type of topography for institutions based on private land tenure: the resources needed for agrarian production are simply not uniformly available.

Diagram B indicates the major climatic parameters for the region. There should be no surprises here. The highland area with the shortest growing season also has the most abundant rainfall. Since it has a short growing season, its moisture has to be taken and used elsewhere where the growing season is appropriate. The soil situation (not shown in the diagram) is of course equally problematic. Because of the extensive glaciation, soil types, vary enormously even by quarter sections, and this imposes a considerable burden on agriculture.

Diagram C shows the response to these resource variables in terms of the history of the human population. This diagram consists of a mosaic of diagrams of the townships of the region we studied—123 full-sized townships—and for each of these townships we have mapped the gross population for a period of sixty years (1900-1960). In this fashion the variability of population in both time and space is readily observable. The townships with the *low, flat* curves are those areas that have had livestock production consistently from the beginning of settlement, or are getting it. The township curves with the *steep rise* and *sudden decay* are those that were populated primarily by homestead farmers, or where homestead farming was superimposed on an old ranching population. The strangely-shaped curves showing very *late peaks* are indicative either of Hutterite colonies that have moved in recently, or of sudden growth in one or two of the small towns of the area. Other of the demographic profiles with plateau characteristics reflect population stabilization resulting from community pastures, irrigation projects and other resource development schemes. These schemes stabilize the population in a number of ways—by assuring somewhat more stable income, for instance, so that some of the children stay on the farms longer, or by preventing the sale of farms, especially the smaller ones.



B. Climatic Parameters for Jasper Region.

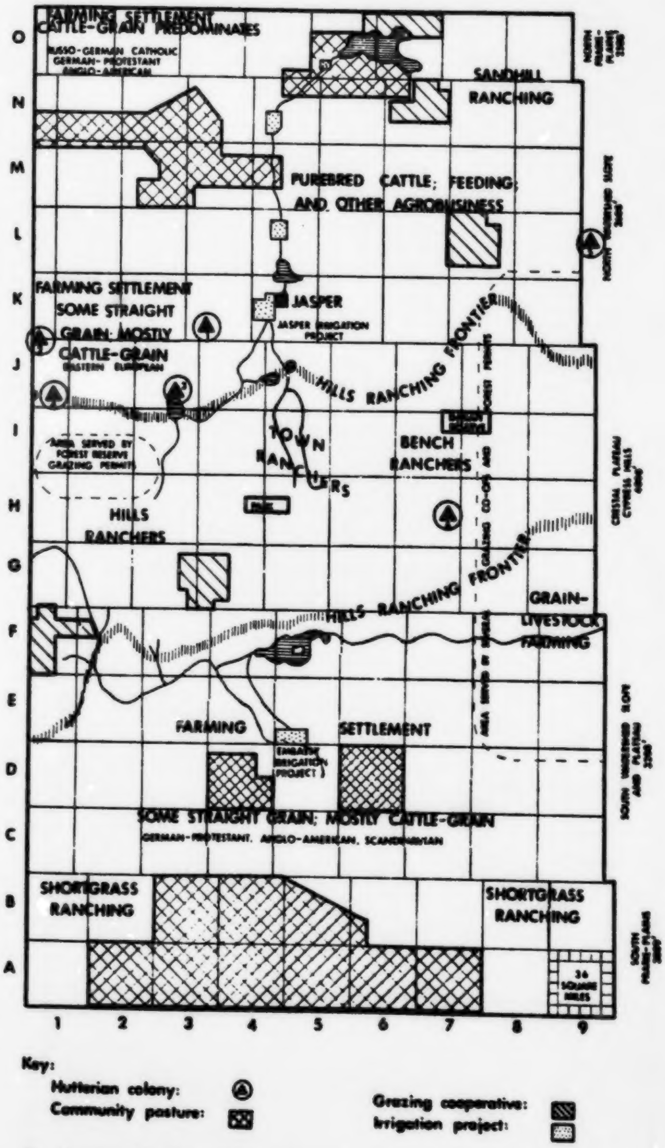


C. Gross Population Curve for each Jasper Township: 1900-1960. (Some townships, as indicated, contain population units causing modifications of the typical "country" curve shapes.)

Diagram D shows the ethnic, occupational, and economic development of the region. On either side of the hills another characteristic North American western pattern is quite evident: various resource development schemes, all of them designed to solve the problem mentioned earlier of bringing resources to the site where they are needed, in this case the fading or failing grain economy or undersized cattle-grain economy of the homestead farmers. And, as has been the case for the P.F.R.A. programs in western Canada, these schemes have attempted to tie together community pastures with irrigation programs to provide year-round stabilized regimes for the smaller farmers converting from grain to cattle, or to some desirable mixture of these. This diagram also shows the position of the ethnic population, and illustrates facts found elsewhere in the Great Plains: the best land went to the Anglo-American and Northern European homestead populations; the poorer lands to the Eastern Europeans; and this resources differential is responsible for a certain degree of social stratification. It is also apparent in the diagram that the ranching population is confined largely to the hills and parts of the slopes, and the farming to the plains area.

The political divisions shown in Diagram E mirror the general ecology. The Rural Municipalities are the smaller political units. In Saskatchewan, the Rural Municipality is roughly analogous to a county in Alberta or the United States, only usually smaller. The larger political units are called Local Improvement Districts (L.I.D.) and have the most dispersed populations and also the lowest per capita incomes, or in some cases the lowest absolute incomes. In any case, the L.I.D. units do not have sufficient tax money to permit self-support so they are supported with the help of grants from the provincial government. Generally, then, the more dispersed the population, and the more extensive the use of resources (which in this area means largely ranching), the larger the political unit. Parts of the road pattern can also be seen on this diagram. The north-south road system follows topographical channels through the hills and was selected by the pioneers of the ranching community. The regular grid pattern of roads (which is not visible in the diagram), developed primarily on an east-west basis and was established by the homestead-farmer settlement on the basis of the grid survey. The region, today, has still what would be regarded as a confused transportation pattern. The issue of whether the north-south natural pattern through the coulees, or the regular grid pattern, is to dominate, has not really been resolved, resulting in certain difficulties in transportation.

Now, to state the problem as an ecological anthropologist would, we are dealing in this region with various human groups who share the same general pattern of resources and the same general pattern of institutions (that means not only local institutions, but also the national institutions like the market and the government that supply resources).



FARMING SETTLEMENT
CATTLE-GRAIN PREDOMINATES
RUSSO-GERMAN CATHOLIC
GERMAN-PROTESTANT
ANGLO-AMERICAN
SANDHILL RANCHING
NORTH PRAIRIE-PLAINS
PUREBRED CATTLE; FEEDING; AND OTHER AGROBUSINESS
NORTH WATERSHED SLOPE
FARMING SETTLEMENT
SOME STRAIGHT GRAIN: MOSTLY CATTLE-GRAIN
EASTERN EUROPEAN
JASPER
JASPER IRRIGATION PROJECT
HILLS RANCHING FRONTIER
AREA SERVED BY FOREST RESERVE GRAZING PERMITS
TOWN RANCHERS
BENCH RANCHERS
AREA SERVED BY GRAZING CO-OPS AND FOREST PERMITS
CRESTAL PLATEAU CYPRESS HILLS
HILLS RANCHERS
HILLS RANCHING FRONTIER
GRAIN-LIVESTOCK FARMING
FARMING SETTLEMENT
EMBARK IRRIGATION PROJECT
SOUTH WATERSHED SLOPE AND PLATEAU
SOME STRAIGHT GRAIN; MOSTLY CATTLE-GRAIN
GERMAN-PROTESTANT. ANGLO-AMERICAN. SCANDINAVIAN
SHORTGRASS RANCHING
SHORTGRASS RANCHING
36 SQUARE MILES
SOUTH PRAIRIE-PLAINS
O
N
M
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K
J
I
H
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F
E
D
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A
1
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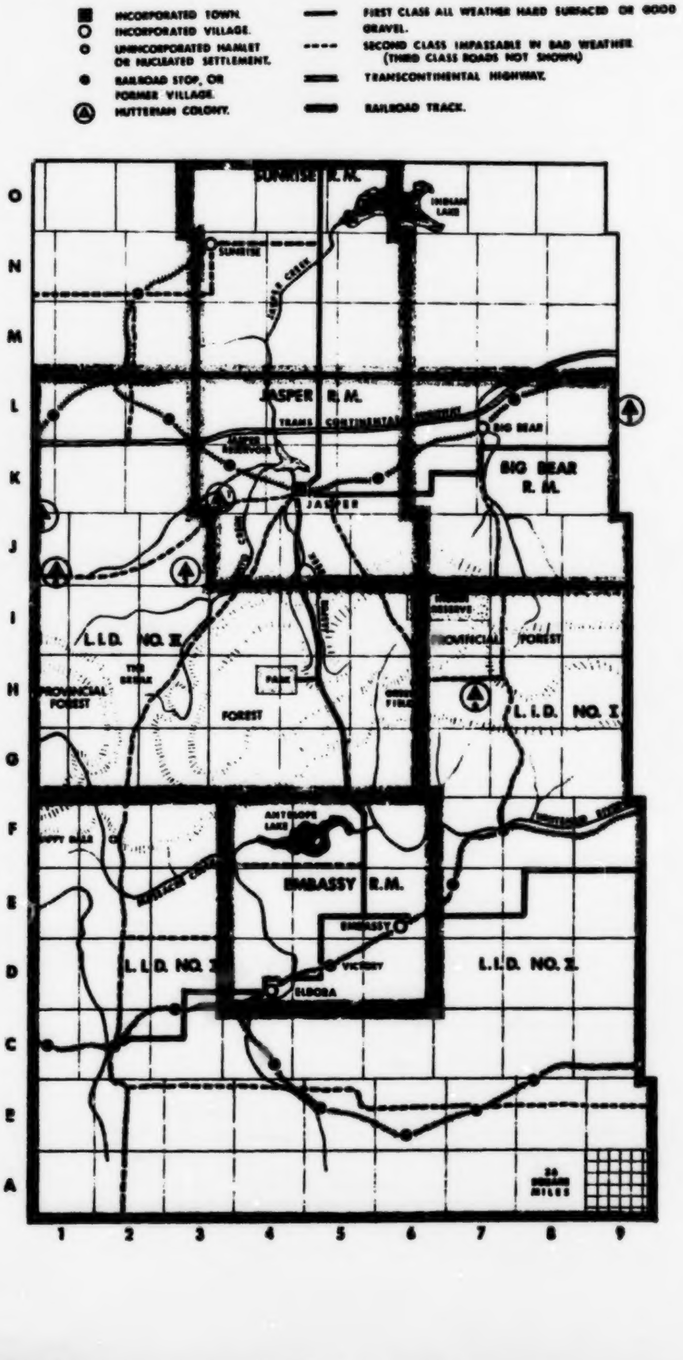
Key:
Hutterian colony:
Community pasture:
Grazing cooperative:
Irrigation project:

D. Jasper Region: Physiography, Economy and Ethnicity.

E. *Jasper Region to 1964: Political Divisions; Major Roads; Places.*


INCORPORATED TOWN.
INCORPORATED VILLAGE.
UNINCORPORATED HAMLET OR NUCLEATED SETTLEMENT.
RAILROAD STOP, OR FORMER VILLAGE.
HUTTERIAN COLONY.
FIRST CLASS ALL WEATHER HARD SURFACED OR GOOD GRAVEL.
SECOND CLASS IMPASSABLE IN BAD WEATHER (THIRD CLASS ROADS NOT SHOWN)
TRANSCONTINENTAL HIGHWAY.
RAILROAD TRACK.
SUNRISE R.M.
INDIAN LAKE
SUNRISE
JASPER CREEK
JASPER R.M.
TRANS CONTINENTAL HIGHWAY
BIG BEAR
BIG BEAR R.M.
JASPER
L.I.D. NO. II
PROVINCIAL FOREST
PARK
FOREST
PROVINCIAL FOREST
L.I.D. NO. I
ANTELOPE LAKE
EMBASSY R.M.
EMBASSY
VICTORY
ELBORA
L.I.D. NO. I
L.I.D. NO. II
36 SQUARE MILES
O
N
M
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These people, however, do not live in the same micro-habitats, or places, in the region, which means that, in fact, some resources available to them are different. The question of the importance of these differences is one that involves not only the nature of particular resources, but the way these people use the resources and the kind of knowledge they have which permits that use. All of these, of course, are variables. In ecological terms, we have different *niches*. In the case of agrarian man, the most intelligent translation of the term "niche" is probably "mode of production," or a combination of mode of production and the particular resources that are available and being used by that group. So we have Diagram F—something you can call niches, "modes of production", or production-plus-resources — or even what we have called "adaptive postures". Associated with these postures are differing styles of management, differing cultural styles, differing ideologies. And this means also differing relationships to the outside world.

What, then, are some of the key features of these adaptive postures, or niches, which Diagram F illustrates. First, the Indians, who are actually not on this diagram, because they are not in the entrepreneurial

	Cultural Style: Emphasis on Tradition or Nature of Expressive Solidarity	*Orientation to External Society*	*Relations with Government*	*Technical Innovativeness*	*Use of Natural Resources*	*Economic Scale*	*Opportunity Costs*	*Susceptibility to Economic Fluctuation and Environment Variability*	*Level of Living*
HUTTERITES	Unchanging sectarian culture	Exclusionistic; withdrawal; largely independent	Distant; manipulative	Very innovative	Intensive and extensive; conservationist	Large	Low	Reduced greatly by diversification and scale	Collectively high; individually low; but probably rising in both categories
RANCHERS	Traditional western and localized culture	Reserved; mixture of independence and dependence	Distant; manipulative; on individual basis	Very conservative	Extensive; minimal; specializied; conservationist	Large to medium	Low; variable	Reduced greatly by resources use pattern, plus high prices	Modest, varies by income rising slightly
FARMERS	Weak traditions; secular viewpoint	Open; dependent on outside to large extent	Participative; directive; on group basis	Conservative and innovative—depends on situation or scale	Intensive; conservation difficult due to small scale	Small	High; variable	Considerable vulnerability	Modest, probably rising

F. Adaptive Postures of Jasper Entrepreneurial Agriculturists.

agrarian economy. This means, in effect, that they are non-people. None of the external institutional supports of the economy assist these people and instead what we have is essentially a dole. The Indians are light-years away from the others in terms of their basic adaptive posture. Only recently in North America are we beginning to realize how far away economic marginals really are from the wage earners. The poverty movements and other political and social movements have finally shown this, and made it apparent to us that the only way these people can be brought into the majority society is to supply them with something similar in the way of supports. The Indians, then, are true economic marginals. They lack a cash surplus, which means they have no possibility of accumulating any funds that would permit them to invest in a more productive regime. They live on the dole, by panhandling, petty swindles, and a very occasional labouring job.

As for the groups represented on Diagram F, the Hutterites, first of all, present a unique combination of isolation and involvement. In other words, the Hutterites are people who have in one sense a maximal separation or isolation from the external world, and in another sense a deep involvement with that world. And it is this unique combination that makes the Hutterites successful. Another way to define this success is of course to point to their communal social system which provides extraordinary savings in labour and energy because of the extensive sharing. However, holding aloof, the Hutterites actually gain, because they keep their opportunity costs low. By restraining their own educational program, the Hutterites are barred to employment opportunities that require certification of certain levels and degrees of education. This means, then, that without reasonable opportunity on the outside, Hutterite labour for the colony has very low opportunity costs. And it is this factor, I am convinced, that keeps Hutterites in their colonies, although there are many other factors of attraction, such as the force of ideological socialization. But I think in the long run what keeps Hutterites on the campus is the low opportunity cost advantage that results from their unique arms-length involvement with the external society, which thus encourages efficiency and an adequate scale of operations for the high-risk Plains.

There are, of course, adaptive problems that are not shown on this chart: if you look at the Hutterite population in terms of its adaptive posture in the larger area of western Canada, you find some deficiencies. For example, the indefinite increase of the Hutterite population in western Canada as a whole is increasingly a maladaptive factor, for they are running out of land in large enough packages to support their colonies. But this takes us outside of the Jasper region.

When we turn to the adaptive posture of the ranchers we see something curiously resembling the Hutterite case. If in the Jasper region one told a rancher that he resembled a Hutterite, one would be fortunate to get out alive! This is an example of the difference between ecology and culture. Culturally, one probably cannot imagine a more distantly related people, Hutterites and ranchers, at least in terms of the contents of their cultures. But in terms of their adaptive postures they are remarkably similar. Both have, of course, the advantages of large scale, and because they have had the advantages of large scale, they have been able to handle their population growth, such as it is. Ranchers' population growth is less than the Hutterites', but the point is that one way or another, in this region, population has never pressed against resources for either group. This means that there has been a tendency towards traditionalizing the social system and cultural values (again I am excluding content which is very different). This means also that both groups have low opportunity costs—the ranchers slightly higher, but ranchers, like Hutterites, with their traditionalized and localized culture, restrict their sons' education. This means that the ranching son has reduced opportunities on the outside, or access only to menial jobs which are not as prestigious, ego-rewarding, or as remunerative as ranching. One can do better as a Hutterite or rancher than one can as a garage mechanic on the outside. So again low opportunity costs tend to keep people on the campus. The effects of this are found in the development of kinship and other kinds of localized social networks, and the development of a relatively traditionalized culture. The rancher, like the Hutterite, is suspicious of the outside, although in a very different way. He likes to keep control of his dealings with the outside. The ranching economy, however, has benefitted greatly everywhere in Canada and the U.S. by low overhead costs which it has managed to negotiate with various legislatures and governments. There are real economic reasons for keeping the overhead cost of ranching low—assuming you want to preserve ranching as a way of raising cattle—and ranchers benefit greatly from the political treatment they have received, as have farmers.

The farmers, however, are the most vulnerable of the three enterpreneurial groups on Diagram F (although, of course, much less vulnerable than the Indians). The opportunity costs of farming are high, and one of the reasons that young farmers leave the farm in increasing numbers, is that they can do better outside. Many of these farms in the southwestern part of the province have very low capitalization, the scale of farming is too small for the resources, and consequently, a given amount of capital probably will earn more if it is invested in a drug store in Medicine Hat or Swift Current. So there is a general drift away from the farm because of the high opportunity costs of farming and farm life. These people are vulnerable, then, because of their small scale, although that is being taken care of to some extent by the development of various resources projects.

Farming, partly because of the nature of the settlers themselves who came from small towns in the East or the mid-West, partly because it has had to orient itself to the outside through its political movements, and partly because of its need for education in order to equip the out-migrating population, displays a less traditionalized culture than the ranching occupation. Farmers are more oriented to the outside, which means they are more oriented toward political participation. Ranchers, on the other hand, and to some extent Hutterites, are oriented towards a manipulative political strategy. That means—in ideal-typical terms—that a rancher Hutterite typically avoids dealing with the local representatives of government, but tries to contact influential people in Regina. Farmers, on the other hand, create local bastions of power and elect their own men, thereby taking control of government. It is a different set of strategies and these strategies make sense in light of the different adaptive postures.

Let us turn now to macro-processes of adaptation. By "macro-processes", we mean processes of adaptation that take place over relatively long periods of time and affect everybody in the region. The first we call *resources specialization*, which really means the refinement of land use. From the standpoint of a cultural ecologist, the word "resources" includes human, economic and social resources, as well as natural; not only soil and water, for instance, but also transportation, demographic patterns, and services. In these terms, over some seventy-five years of settlement, modes of production have gradually moved into resource pockets that are more suitable for those modes. The region has gradually become more and more specialized in its geographical allocation of particular kinds of productive units and productive types. Originally, range cattle-raising was spread out over the whole area regardless of altitude or growing season. The homestead farming episode changed this; then homestead farming withdrew from the dry areas, various kinds of livestock production moved in again, and livestock feeding and other kinds of agro-business developed, particularly in substandard soils nearer transportation arteries. The region is now approaching a relatively specialized economic profile in which the modes of production or the gainful occupations are distributed in areas that are suitable from the standpoint of social, economic and natural resources. This process is by no means finished. Since it is subject to these external forces of the market economy which are constantly changing the definition of resource, it will probably continue indefinitely. So the question of stability of resources specialization is one thing, and the question of stability of income is quite another: the former can be achieved without the latter, as data of our study has made clear.

Another macro-process may be called *co-operation and competition*, and concerns the extent to which the ranching and farming populations—anybody who is producing in the region—has balanced competitive and co-operative mechanisms. The general drift in Jasper is toward more co-operative relations and away from more competitive relations, but the region is also evolving toward a sophisticated combination of co-operative and competitive mechanisms. Generally speaking, co-operation, co-operative uses of resources, and co-operative ownership of resources is increasing in Jasper, as it is almost everywhere in the North American West.

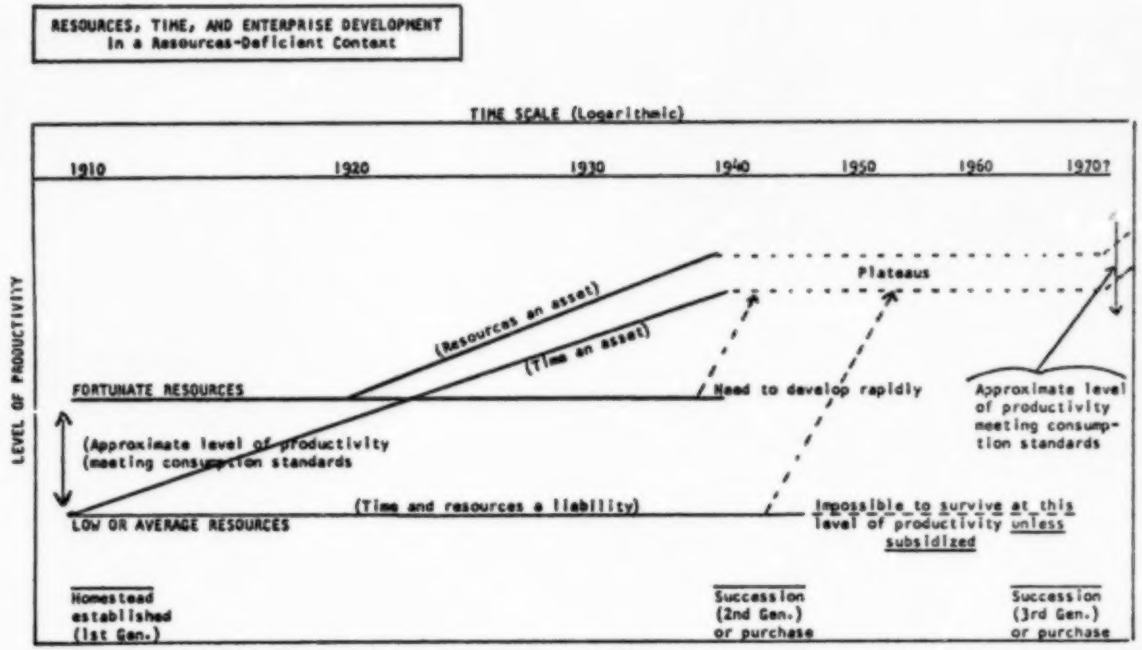
The third macro-process this study has dealt with may be called *competitive replacement*. Competitive replacement, from an ecological standpoint, is simply a way of expressing the fact that some people adapt better than others, and actually replace them. The most outstanding case in Jasper is the Hutterite migration which replaced a whole series of failing farms in particular localities. As a matter of fact, the location of the colonies in the Jasper region is governed entirely by the degree of adaptive success of homestead agriculture in any given locality, and therefore the sell-out to the Hutterites is an operational definition of the adaptive failure of homestead agriculture. But this is not the only example of competitive replacement. Generally speaking, in Jasper as elsewhere, farmers are replacing ranchers. It is difficult to know how far that process will go, but, in economic production terms, it means that a medium-scale cattle-grain economy is replacing a large-scale ranching economy. This is not merely a gradual process, but is the direct result of rancher-farmer competition for land, which in turn is part of a provincial political process: the farmers using politics to get land from the ranchers, and the ranchers using what political means they have to stop them.

The fourth adaptive macro-process the study has dealt with may be called *behavioural selection*, and is very complicated. "Behavioural selection" refers to whether or not over the course of sixty to seventy years in this region, there has been a selection of a certain kind of human being, or rather, of a certain kind of behavioural strategy of dealing with resources. This is taking adaptive posture down to the level of the individual or individual family. We pursued the problem with every scrap of data we could get our hands on: grade records in schools; migration; kinship and family records; studies of management styles. Our general conclusion is that, over a period of time, there was a selection of consumption-deferring, patient, cautious, conservative operators. We have not measured these people with T.A.T.'s or Rorschachs, so we do not have measured personality data, only behaviour as observed in our various field studies. Hence, we cannot say that there was a selective process favouring some kind of neurological or bio-physical type. However, we do know that the people who stayed were those who had a cautious, consumption-deferring behavioral profile in the management of their farms and ranches and their domestic economy. These people, of course, were those who survived the drought and the depression; and obviously external factors like drought and depression had an important impact on the selection process.

What management specialists have considered to be "backwardness" in this part of the province, then, is partly due to the disposition of these people. They are not inclined toward innovation or investment, due to the searing experiences of the past. There was in this area for a period of approximately one-and-a-half to two human generations, a selection of conservative managers, of people who behaved somewhat like peasantry. However, unlike peasants who are usually partly self-subsistent, these people are still completely involved in the entrepreneurial system and accept the concept of market economy as we know these in North America, and therefore they have been more ready to change and move toward a more innovative and daring kind of management strategy as things have improved. This change was under way in the third and fourth generation operators of agricultural enterprises.

The final macro-process, *demographic retention*, has already been mentioned. It describes nothing more than the tendency for population in certain townships or areas to be retained at about 5% rate, that is about 5% fewer people migrate as a result of these resources development projects. This is not resulting, however, in an increase in population—simply a stabilization of population at a certain level.

So much for the macro-processes. Let us conclude with a sample of what we call "micro-processes" of adaptation. Micro-processes of adaptation are those which pertain largely to decisions and phenomena of the particular locality and the local social system. Diagram G portrays the problem that a successor to an agricultural enterprise in this region confronts, given the changing agrarian market economy of North America. Starting at the left-hand side, we see that a man could begin with fortunate resources at the homestead start in terms of quantity or geographic location (the upper line), or he has bad luck and he gets poor resources (the bottom line). In the latter case time and resources become liabilities. If the homesteader, starting in 1910, does nothing, the line is straight, and that means that, at the second generation's succession, his son, or if the place is purchased, the buyer, must work hard in order to get up to the productivity level needed for a given income. So the longer steep diagonal line implies the investment of much effort to raise that enterprise to the desired or needed productivity. On the other hand, if the man started with fortunate resources, and did nothing to enhance those resources, the second generation successor or purchaser would still have less work to do or less need for capital to get up to the same level of productivity. If, however, the founder of the enterprise kept developing even with his fortunate resources, he would get on a plateau and his successor would most likely do nothing. We studied these enterprises over about a fifty-year period, and this chart represents actual



NOTE: Quality of resources depend greatly on chance in homesteading period, since no technical information available to settlers.

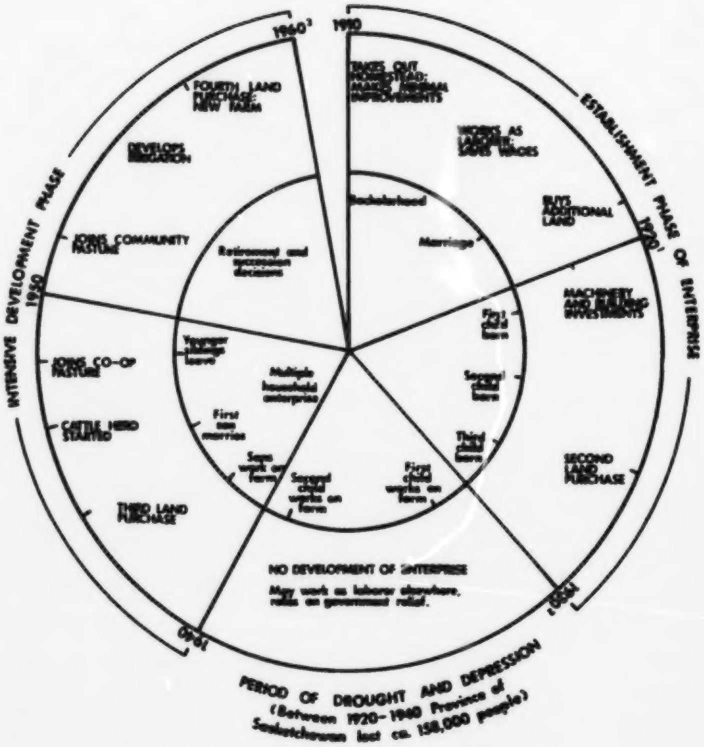
NOTE: Increase in productivity assumed to be achieved by any and all means—financial, ecological, acquirement of more land, etc. Vertical axis also could be defined as capital value of enterprise or an income factor of some kind.

G. Resources, Time, and Enterprise Development in a Resources-Deficient Context.

findings. The point is that the poorer the enterprise at takeover, the greater the effort the takeover manager has to put forth to reach the given level of productivity, which usually mans that he will be very innovative. So we found that the manifestation of innovation is closely related to the economic position of the enterprise at any given point, but particularly at the second generation takeover. We have found that this can be expressed in terms of a logarithmic time-scale. In other words, the amount of time a person has to develop his enterprise or innovation is logarithmic, since, as he goes into the future he has less and less time to release the given quantum of productive energy.

Diagram H is the result of studies of a large number of enterprises, but with reference to the relationship between the development cycles of the family and the enterprise. Actually, this particular segment of our research was hit upon almost by accident. I was studying enterprise development and the factors that encourage it or impede it, and my associate was studying family cycles. We were doing these tasks quite independently because the family cycle study involved collecting genealogies and tracing migrants, while the enterprise study involved, of course, mostly economic and management work. Then, as we got together in the evenings and began to compare our notes, we discovered that we were really on the same track. We began to discover that management decisions were vitally influenced by family decisions. Now this was, in general, known to us. There has been some research by agricultural economists and others on these matters, but cultural ecology studies by anthropologists have explored the problem more thoroughly. Many comparative studies of family cycle and agricultural development have been undertaken for the Middle East, Africa, the Far East, and Latin America.

The family cycle is indicated on Diagram H by the inner circle. There actually are several types of these family cycles. The diagram is that of the typical 1910 homestead farmer, aged 20 and unmarried at time of homesteading. This is a particularly important type of settler in the Jasper region; in other parts of the Great Plains you will find different types. Ranchers also differ from farmers. However, since the processes are all pretty much the same, let us use this man. A young, unmarried settler in 1910 establishes a homestead farm, and he delays both his marriage and the purchase of additional land and equipment until he has collected a small stake. That delay was in some respects a critical decision, because one of the main reasons that our man might leave the region by 1912 to 1915, was that decision to delay purchasing his extra land or machinery. If he had not delayed—had gone for broke right at the beginning—he might have had more of a stake accumulated to meet the needs of his later family. However, having delayed the decision to marry meant that he accumulated children at the same time the enterprise accumulated needs for expansion. A similar development


1960
1910
TAKES OUT HOMESTEAD; MAKES MINIMUM IMPROVEMENTS
WORKS AS LABORER; SAVES WAGES
BUYS ADDITIONAL LAND
1920
MACHINERY AND BUILDING INVESTMENTS
SECOND LAND PURCHASE
1930
NO DEVELOPMENT OF ENTERPRISE
May work as laborer elsewhere, relies on government relief.
1940
THIRD LAND PURCHASE
CATTLE HERD STARTED
JOINS CO-OP PASTURE
1950
JOINS COMMUNITY PASTURE
DEVELOPS IRRIGATION
FOURTH LAND PURCHASE: NEW FARM
Bachelorhood
Marriage
First child born
Second child born
Third child born
First child works on farm
Second child works on farm
Sons work on farm
First son marries
Multiple household enterprise
Younger siblings leave
Retirement and succession decisions
ESTABLISHMENT PHASE OF ENTERPRISE
PERIOD OF DROUGHT AND DEPRESSION
(Between 1920-1940 Province of Saskatchewan lost ca. 158,000 people)
INTENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PHASE

H. Family Cycle and Enterprise Cycle—
1910 Homestead Farmer, Age 20

1. *In the period 1910-1920: 28% of initial homesteaders and their families left permanently.*
2. *In the period 1920-1930: an additional 34% left; thus, from 1910-1930, 62% of initial homesteaders left.*
3. *Of the remaining farmers 63% retired between 1940 and 1960. Of these, 52% were succeeded by sons.*

led many others to leave this part of Saskatchewan between 1910 and 1920. The data accompanying the diagram are from a sample homestead farming township, and indicates that in this period 28% of the initial homesteaders and their families left the region permanently. They had delayed too long in beginning expansion of the enterprise. However, the diagram shows the case of a man who stayed, and overcame the unfortunate pressure points at which enterprise needs and family needs happened to intersect. But many did not.

In the 1920's, when our homesteader was having to work very hard to build up the place, the children were too young to help on the farm, and there was a labour shortage. However, there still were mouths to feed. Note also that the drought and depression hit just when the children were almost ready to help on the farm, and this help saved a number of farms. Father could get work in the mines in British Columbia while the youngsters stayed home and kept shop. Note that out-migration was particularly severe in the establishment phase of the enterprise and moderately so in the drought-depression period. The one adaptive advantage these 1910 people had was that they did have children who were old enough to keep the farming going, such as it was, during the drought and depression period. But out-migration continues in the intensive development phase even under conditions of prosperity.

The family cycle involves settlement; the establishment of a home and farm; the raising of children; and finally the launching of these children. But what is to be done with them? One will take over the enterprise, but others will have to go. In the decade, 1940-1950, as can be seen in Diagram H, pressures began to accumulate again. One of the sons became old enough to begin making the decision as to whether he was going to continue the enterprise his father started. The oldest son married and multiple-household enterprise was created at the same time the operator had to begin his cattle herd. Fortunately, he had help now from the government in doing this, but it still required a considerable investment. Therefore, many people left the region during the latest period also, even though it was one of relative prosperity as measured by income. Many people in the region never really had a chance to develop the enterprise and live a normal family life. To put it another way, there is maximum opportunity here for unfortunate coincidences between enterprise and family cycles. The most intensive development of most enterprises was delayed until the relatively prosperous period of the 1950's. Because it took so long to get the thing going, the multiple household enterprise and family and the succession-decision-making period were also delayed until the 1950's, and then there was tremendous pressure on the enterpriser to get the farm ready for succession. Not all of them managed it. Hence, another heavy out-migration period ensued.

It would also seem that from 1910 to 1960 was the time it took to establish in the Jasper region a reasonably stable family enterprise. Comparing the cycle of the enterprise in Jasper with cycles of enterprise in the James River Valley of South Dakota, a more fortunate Great Plains environment, it has taken the Jasper enterpriser about one generation longer to reach the same point of stability. The 1910 homesteader was disadvantaged from the beginning. One might say that he planned to let his family and enterprise develop as if he had settled in Iowa or Ontario. However, he did know that it was going to take him a generation longer to establish his enterprise. I think this is the basic micro-definition of maladaptability of homestead agriculture (or generally, grain agriculture) to the western Canadian provinces. It is especially dramatic in this case because Jasper is an unusually vulnerable area for small crop farming.

This analysis of family and enterprise cycles has provided clues as to the dynamics of migration. It has shown us that the conditions that control migration tend to be entirely relative to the pressure points that develop between the family cycle and the enterprise cycle. In other words, national or provincial indices of income or per capita figures do not tell us who is going to leave and who is going to stay. Conditions of prosperity may encourage either departure or staying. So we find at the micro level some complicated interrelationships of income stability, resources, needs to expand the enterprise, and needs to finance families. It has, as well, shown us something about the institutional factors that influence father-son relationships and kinship relationships generally in the Great Plains farm family. It has given us clues as to the whole process of enterprise development and agronomic innovation. It has also given us some clues as to the causes of political action. We think—although here we're on very insecure ground—that these periods of pressure when enterprise and family cycles intersect were also periods in which the farmer entered into political action. They coincide quite well with upswings of radical sentiment and activity on the prairies. But this is a tentative observation because the Jasper region is not an especially typical case if one is interested in agrarian radicalism in western Canada. However, there is a relationship, and it is a good hypothesis for future research.

11

IMAGES OF PRAIRIE MAN

ELI MANDEL

A subject like "images of prairie man" involves a number of difficult questions. At the simplest and most obvious level, presumably one accepts some kind of pluralistic approach, and then merely lists, in as interesting a way as possible, all those works which have concerned themselves with the prairies or the plains area; this kind of listing, we know, suggests, if nothing else, at least the variety and range of articulate response to an environment, all the way, for example, from that extraordinary blend of history, legend, and reminiscence, Wallace Stegner's *Wolf Willow*, to a curious and perhaps justly uncelebrated pamphlet in the Social Credit Board Education Series, *Alice in Blunderland*. But pluralism, like inter-disciplinary conferences, raises its own questions: the question of coherence and unity, for example. What, if anything, do we find in common, in, say, the Manitoba of Martha Ostenso, of Frederick Philip Grove, of Gabrielle Roy, of Adele Wiseman, and John Marlyn? Or what mysterious links can we discover between the radical metaphors of Wilfred Watson's *Friday's Child* and the descriptive impressionism of Anne Marriot's *The Wind Our Enemy?* We might, of course, content ourselves with observing that, by definition, unique responses remain unique, but then my subject simply disappears. An infinite variety of unique responses can never add up to the commonality implied by "prairie man." Indeed, the kind of articulation, patterning, and signification we mean by the term "image" suggests that we are looking for impressions and responses that have been raised into the order of thought. If we mean seriously to talk about images of prairie man, we are in fact concerned with prairie art and prairie literature, and we believe that somehow, as art and literature, they can be distinguished from other forms of art and literature.

Let me suggest the extreme limits of our discussion here: one limit seems to me to be what I would call the sociological one; the other, mythical. The sociological sees literature and art as reflections of (or interactions with) environment. Everyone knows Paul Hiebert's superb parody of such an approach to literature. Of Sarah Binks, the sweet songstress of Saskatcewan, he remarks, "Unschooled, but unspoiled, this simple country girl has captured in her net of poesy the flatness of that

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great province."[1] That approach, after all, is not so very different from W. D. Lighthall's in his Introduction to *Songs of the Great Dominion*, an 1889 anthology of Canadian Poetry. Lighthall was convinced his poets, like Sarah, sounded the depths of geography and history: "Through them, taken all together, you may catch something of great Niagara falling, of brown rivers rushing with foam, of the crack of the rifle in the haunts of the moose and caribou, the lament of vanishing races singing their death-song as they are swept on to the cataract of oblivion. . . ." Lighthall, by the way, was a great enthusiast who loved to celebrate Canada in tones worthy of any Board of Trade Chairman: "her four-thousand-mile panorama of noble rivers," he exclaims, "(her) wilde forests, ocean-like prairies; her towering snow-capped rockies . . . She has by far the richest extent of fisheries, forests, wheat lands, and fur regions in the world; some of the greatest public works; some of the loftiest mountain-ranges, the vastest rivers, the healthiest and most beautifully varied seasons." His immediate contribution to images of prairie man, I suppose is this: "Her Valley of Saskatchewan alone, it has been scientifically computed, will support eight hundred millions."[2]

If Hiebert and Lighthall illustrate one extreme approach that sees literature as a reflection of environment, Leslie Fiedler illustrates another extreme, one that sees environment as a creation of literature. In *The Return of The Vanishing American*, Fiedler remarks on a "fact, too obvious," he says, "to have been properly observed or understood, that geography in the United States is mythological":

> From the earliest times, American writers have tended to define their own country—and much of our literature has, consequently, tended to define itself—topologically, as it were, in terms of the four cardinal directions: a mythicized North, South, East, and West. Correspondingly, there have always been four kinds of American books: Northerns, Southerns, Easterns and Westerns . . .[3]

It is worth observing that while Canadians generally are not aware of their own mythicized geography, some tentative critical analyses have been attempted: Northrop Frye's reviews in "Letters in Canada" in the *University of Toronto Quarterly*, for example; James Reaney's "The Canadian Poets' Predicament" and "The Third Eye" D. G. Jone's "The Sleeping Giant" and Milton Wilson's essay on "Klein's Drowned Poet,' among others. Perhaps it is not accidental that for the most part such criticism concerns itself with problems of a *national* mythology. And perhaps, too, we should not be surprised to find that discussions of regional literature, especially prairie literature, tend to be sociological. It is my impression, admittedly based on scant knowledge, that regions get themselves defined in a variety of ways, all implying a certain determinism. Yet the interdisciplinary nature of a consultation like this one suggests that "prairie" means something different: a sort of complex conceptual framework within which various social inter-relationships can be viewed and understood. It is difficult to keep steadily in mind that "prairie" means nothing more than this, that it is a mental construct, a region of the human mind, a myth. No matter, studies of prairie literature, like E. A. McCourt's *The Canadian West in Fiction* and Egglestone's *The Frontier in Canadian Letters*, assume the priority of environment, and even Warren Tallman's "Wolf in the Snow," which pays such tribute to the "intangible (called) self," involves those other "intangibles" which, he says, "decisively influence (the self's) efforts to come into presence,"[4] while Henry Kreisel in his very fine study "The Prairie: A State of Mind" seems quite unaware of any contradiction between his title and his remark, "All discussion of the literature produced in the Canadian west must of necessity begin with the impact of the landscape upon the mind."[5]

In this, Kreisel is very like McCourt who argues in *The Canadian West in Fiction* that three features will distinguish regional writing: one is accuracy in description; a second is poetic power in evoking the atmosphere of a particular environment and a third is a kind of psychological insight into the influence of a particular environment on the lives of those who inhabit it. "True regional literature," remarks McCourt, "is above all distinctive in that it illustrates the effect of particular, rather than general, physical, economic, and racial features upon the lives of ordinary men and women. It should and usually does do many other things besides, but if it does not illustrate the influence of a limited and peculiar environment it is not true regional literature."[6]

Perhaps we can appreciate that, if we accept McCourt's view of regional literature, at the very least we face a peculiar problem. It is the problem of literary realism. McCourt insists on the presence of a limited and peculiar environment accurately described. But what can "accuracy" possibly mean here? Certainly not what Ian Watt means when he says, "Formal realism is, of course, like the rules of evidence, only a convention," really just "a set of narrative procedures,"[7] no truer than the report of any other set of conventions. Certainly not what Austin Warren means when he says realism is a "literary-philosophical movement" essentially "like romanticism or surrealism."[8] Certainly not what Desmond McCarthy means when he says, "If Pecksniff were transported into the *Golden Bowl* he would become extinct."[9] The temptation is to believe that "accurate description" really means the imitation of certain easy cliches and stereotypes about landscape and environment.

If, in fact, we think for a moment about some of the wide variety of prairie novels (and I'm not going to name them), we can see at once that it is just this easy assumption about accuracy which destroys their possible value as a means of insight into prairie life and prairie images. Perhaps this explains why regional literature is often thought to be quaint or peculiar, something off in an odd corner, or backwoods, or forgotten area, something that has been passed by. "The province or region . . .," remarks Northrop Frye, "is usually a vestigial curiosity to be written up by some nostalgic tourist."[10] And E. K. Brown, who also insists that regional literature should possess accuracy both of fact and tone, decides that "in the end . . . regionalist art will fail because it stresses the superficial and the peculiar at the expense, at least, if not to the exclusion, of the fundamental and universal."[11]

The point we have reached in the argument is this: if it is meaningful to talk about images of prairie man, one should be able to find in, say, prairie literature a certain coherence or unity or identity, but the attempt to find this in some kind of realism or accuracy fails, because accuracy of fact and of tone is essentially superficial, if not indeed a contradiction in terms. In brief, if there is a distinctive regional prairie literature, it would have to be, in Fiedler's terms, mythic; and (as by now you will suspect) I am prepared to argue that we do find in our best writers, precisely such a mythicized world.

Let me turn to an example. For several years—about ten years I believe—W. O. Mitchell wrote a radio series, a highly successful series, called *Jake and the Kid*. These were half-hour broadcasts, stories of a prairie farm boy and his friend, the hired man, Jake, and their curious encounters with a group of oddly assorted characters in the town of Crocus, Saskatchewan; a prairie version, one could say, of Leacock's *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*.

Consider, for a moment, the kid's comments about history, prairie history, in one of Mitchell's stories called "Old MacLachlin Had a Farm."

> Most of the time at Rabbit Hill I don't do so well with history, because I get most of it from Jake, and Miss Henchbaw, that thinks she knows it all, says Jake doesn't know his history right. Whenever I write down Looie Riel was a tall, hungry-looking fellow that wore gold cuff links, chewed Black Judas tobacco, and had a ribbit's foot fob to his watch, she gives me a "D".
>
> But lately I been getting an "H", and that's because of Old Mac's coulee, that some folks call Indian Writing Place because on the rocks at the south end she's all covered over with Indian writing. . . . Ever since we started taking up where Indians roamed over the Crocus district, I been spending a lot of time around Mac's coulee. Whenever I find an arrow-head, I take her to school and get a good mark. Since I started this spring, I've found a war club, the red stone part of a peace pipe, two dozen arrow-heads, a bone-handled razor, and three dozen beer bottles.[12]

But Mac's coulee is not only history, it's geography too, a world of its own, a very special one at that. "Here's how she is," says the Kid:

> Still, still as water, with the sun coming kind of streaky through the wolf willow along her edges—what you might call stiff sunlight the

> way she's full of dust dancing all along her. And when you lie on your belly at the bottom of Mac's coulee, you're in a world; she's your own world, and there's nobody else's there, and you can do what you want with her. You can look close at the heads on the wild oats all real feathery;
>
> you can look at the crocuses and they're purple, not out-and-out purple, but not blue either. If you look real close they got real, small hairs like on a person's face close to a mirror. And there's tumbleweeds caught down there; they make you think about umbrellas that got their cloth ripped off them—like bones only not stary-white like a buffalo skull. Dead plants are better than anything animal that's dead.[13]

And finally Mac's Coulee is legend, the legend of the buffalo jumping pound that Jake tells the kid, the legend of how Jake saved the South Blackfoot from starvation by rounding up and trapping thousands of buffalo in the first mud blizzard to ever hit Saskatchewan.

> "There was a million red lights a-shining through the dust" (says Jake, explaining how one could see the buffalo in the night of dust their stampede created,) a million red lanterns where their eyes wuz, two million bloodshot eyes that lit her up. An' the smell—she wuz enough tuh give a badger the heartburn—like the inside of a blacksmith shop a mile square with a million blacksmiths shoein' a million horses—that wuz how she smelled. They wuz runnin' on smokin' hoofs—red hot, they wuz comin' so fast. An' then they hit that there cliff where the fence angled in. They wuz water there in them days. Soon as them buffalo commenced to go over, there come a hissin' an' a roarin' an' a blowin'—cloud a steam came up from them four million hoofs hittin' that there water—scalded 15 braves and 15 ponies to death. The rest got caught in the blizzard."
>
> "Blizzard!"
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> "Yep. Never seen nothin' like it. Steam hit the dust, turned her to mud, an' she started in to mud. She mudded 15 feet a mud in half an hour—the first mud blizzard I ever see—50 Weasel Tail's braves got smothered to death a-sittin' on their ponies."
>
> I looked at Jake a minute. "Jake," I said, "that's real hist'ry. That's—hist'ry."[14]

When we isolate the features of this story we find, first, a particularized landscape or locale viewed with startling clarity and in minute detail; we have a child who observes or who is seen in the landscape; we have an adult who, either in himself, or in his stories, is a grotesque—the teller of tall tales, the story-teller; we hear the particular speech of a region—dialect; and because dialect is a deviation from standard English, and standard English is thought to be literary English, we have the sense of an anti-literary form; and finally, we have humour in the ludicrous, the grotesque, the tall tale.

The features we find here, I suggest, appear in conjunction in prairie writing more frequently than we might suspect. It is particularly interesting to notice how often the child-figure is connected with the prairie landscape: in McCourt's *Walk Through the Valley*, for example; in Stegner's *Wolf Willow*; in Gabrielle Roy's *Street of Riches*; and, of course, in Mitchell's *Who Has Seen the Wind*. Other less obvious manifestations of the child I propose to come to in a few moments. Here, the point I want to make is that the regional world is essentially the world of childhood, as it is, for example, in other versions of Canadian regionalism, in James Reaney's Stratford, in Alden Nowlan's Maritimes, in Richler's Montreal (if we want to call Montreal a region), in Leacock's Mariposa, and in the most enduring of all Canadian regions, the P.E.I. of *Anne of Green Gables*.

Why the Child figure? One obvious reason is that from the adult's point of view the child's vision is a vision of innocence, of a lost Eden; another way of putting this is that the child's vision—again from the adult's point of view—is of home; and that surely is the essence of what we mean by a region, the overpowering feeling of nostalgia associated with the place we know as the *first* place, the *first* vision of things, the *first* clarity of things. Not realism, then, but rather what in the painting is called magic realism, the qualities we associate with Alex Colville's paintings. Perhaps, not incidently, Ron Bloore, one of a regional school of painters, speaks of Colville as a regionalist, presumably because Colville's work evokes with extraordinary clarity objects, people, places in a design at once objective and dream-like. It is precisely the magical clarity, mistaken for accuracy, that we find in Mitchell's superb descriptions of how a boy becomes aware of objects throughout *Who Has Seen the Wind*.

The child, then, is the focus of nostalgia for the place that was—and regional literature is then a literature of a past. One of the most precise expressions of this point of view, in fact, can be found in Leacock's *Sunshine Sketches*. Where is Mariposa? The Envoi to *Sunshine Sketches* tells us: it is a region of the mind, a memory, a dream of innocence.

But if regional writing moves back in time to a magical land (as in Huck's reverie on the river with Jim) where everything is crystal clear in its most minute detail, it moves also to a world where anything can happen—where all the stories adults tell are tall tales, where our real history is myth, "a mite too rich fer Miss Henchbaw," as Jake would say, "a mite too rich fer folks that are fussy about hist'ry book hist'ry, the kind that like her sort a watered down." After all, from the child's point of view, the smallest objects appear in incredible detail and the largest, distorted, ludicrous, grotesque. Levi-Strauss, incidentally, speculates whether "the small-scale model or miniature. . . . may not in fact be the universal type of the work of art." Even a larger-than-life statue may be said to be a model, he comments, since "it restores what is at first from a distance seen as a rock to the proportions of a man."[15]

The prairie as a myth of childhood? It isn't all that difficult to anticipate objections. What then do we say about the novels of Grove, Ostenso, Sinclair Ross, or about those other novels that do not touch on landscape but take as their setting the city and as their subject the crisis of immigrant life, novels like Adele Wiseman's *The Sacrifice*, John Marlyn's *Under the Ribs of Death*, and Kreisel's *The Betrayal?* I wonder whether the argument is being forced in any way if we focus on the fact that in the majority of the works I have mentioned a major feature is the conflict of generations. The myth of childhood has two forms: a comic one, in which the child is identified with the land, and a tragic one, in which the child is alienated from the land. The alienation easily takes shape as a conflict of father and son, often over the treatment of the land itself, as in Grove's novels, or as a conflict of father and daughter with incestuous implications about the nature of liberated instinct, as in Ostenso's *Wild Geese*.

Alternately, the tragic form takes shape as a father's search for a child, as in Grove's *Over Prairie Trails* and Ross's *As for Me and My House*.

Discussing the nature of the impact of prairie landscape on mind, Dr. Kreisel traces out in detail such themes as these I am now concerned with: the extraordinary sense of confinement by vast and seemingly unlimited space; the anxieties sharpened by this confinement; the definition of self by violation or conquest of land, a conquest which, he says, involves much more violence than we have been yet able to admit, even in our literature; the price paid by the conqueror; the sense of being possessed by the land; the austere puritanism bred in that harsh world; and the melodramatic eruptions of passion because of such restraint; the theme of the imprisoned spirit.[16]

This is an extraordinarily fine and perceptive list of major themes—or images, if you will—of prairie man. For Kreisel, the unifying theme is that of the impact of a particular environment. All that I could add is that I would go further and find the unifying theme and images in the mind itself, projecting *onto* the land its image of its redemptive powers in the figure of a child, and its image of demonic powers in a hostile father or tyrant who is the land.

Not the western, but the northern, says Leslie Fiedler:

> The Northern tends to be tight, gray, low-keyed, underplayed, avoiding melodrama where possible—sometimes, it would seem, at all costs. Typically, its scene is domestic, an isolated household set in a hostile environment. The landscape is mythicized New England, "stern and rockbound," the weather deep winter: a milieu appropriate to the austerities and deprivation of Puritanism.[17]

Well, the prairie "Northern" is not quite the same as the U.S. "Northern" or the Ontario Idyll or the Maritime tale, but it has a shape and a characteristic tone, and a distinguishing attitude. The distinctive element of prairie literature is not, surely, the creation of a new man, but the adaptation of images of the environment to a pattern that belongs to all men. One doesn't have to be extraordinarily perceptive, in fact, to observe how frequently the determining pattern in prairie writing is literary. The pattern shows itself most obviously in conscious myth-makers like Adele Wiseman or Wilfred Watson (and indeed Watson's poems on Emily Carr and Calgary are brilliant examples of the kind) but it appears elsewhere too. It is in McCourt's curious blend of Conrad, Yeats, Hardy, and Wordsworth, designed to insist on the essential loneliness and loss in each human being; it informs the Wordsworthian view of childhood that Mitchell imposes on his Rousseauistic sense of the natural world; and it shows up on Ostenso's mixing of Scandinavian mythology and Freudianism. Such literary and academic overtones tell us that essentially the world being observed is a mental one. The images of prairie man are images of a search for home and therefore a search for the self.

The question we have come to then is not *who* is prairie man, but *what images* does he choose? We began by suggesting that the term "prairies" means a conceptual framework. We can conclude by suggesting that the prairie artist chooses images that help to fill in that conceptual framework. According to Levi-Strauss, the image keeps a future place open for ideas not yet present. It exists then in the realm of possibilities. Perhaps that is why the artist always moves between the end toward which he is impelled and the beginning where all was foretold. Perhaps that is why a young poet like John Newlove seeks his roots in Indian lore and wanders the highways of the province as distracted and obsessive as Grove in the Manitoba winter half a century ago.

Recently, one of our best and most distinguished writers published a book called *Documentaries*. "I like authenticity in reportage," she comments in her Foreword. True enough. But I may be excused for finding in Dorothy Livesay's authentic work, the outlines of the story I have been tracing here. Her summary is all we need.

Returning to Canada after some years in Africa, Dorothy Livesay wanted to discover her country once again:

> To get the feel of my own country again, I drove with my son Peter from Vancouver to my birthplace, Winnipeg. It was mid-May, with spring well started in British Columbia, but just beginning to show in the mountains and on the Prairies. So we had tulips and lilacs all the way, unfolding anew in each city. By the time we reached Winnipeg I was steeped in sensations, so reminiscent of my childhood, of black soil sliding into open sky. Although I had originally hoped to write an objective documentary—a "cross-country checkup" from the Pacific to the Atlantic—I ended up abruptly and subjectively in Winnipeg. My beginnings were there, I knew: Manitoba, pivotal, facing east and west, could be the right place for an ending.[18]

FOOTNOTES

[1] Paul Hiebert, *Sarah Binks*, Toronto, 1964, p. xviii.

[2] W. D. Lighthall, "Introduction to Songs of the Great Dominion, 1889" in *Masks of Poetry*, ed. A. J. M. Smith, Toronto, 1962, pp. 17, 18.

[3] Leslie Fiedler, *The Return of the Vanishing American*, New York, 1968, p. 16.

[4] Warren Tallman, "Wolf in the Snow," in *A Choice of Critics*, ed. George Woodcock, Toronto, 1966, p. 68.

[5] Henry Kreisel, "The Prairie: A State of Mind," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Vol. VI, Series 4 (June, 1968), p. 173.

[6] Edward A. McCourt, *The Canadian West in Fiction*, Toronto, 1949, p. 55.

[7] Ian Watt, "Realism and the Novel Form," in *Approaches to the Novel*, ed. Robert Scholes, San Francisco, 1961, p. 79.

[8] Austen Warren, "Nature and Modes of Narrative Fiction," in *Approaches to the Novel*, p. 193.

[9] Cited in Warren, "Nature and Modes of Narrative Fiction," p. 194.

[10] Northrop Frye, "Canada and Its Poetry," in *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada*, ed. Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski, Toronto, 1967, p. 89.

[11] E. K. Brown, *On Canadian Poetry*, Toronto, 1943, p. 23.

[12] W. O. Mitchell, *Jake and the Kid*, Toronto, 1961, p. 65.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

[15] Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, Chicago, 1968, p. 23.

[16] "The Prairie: A State of Mind," *passim*.

[17] *The Return of the Vanishing American*, p. 16.

[18] Dorothy Livesay, *The Documentaries*, Toronto, 1968, p. 50.

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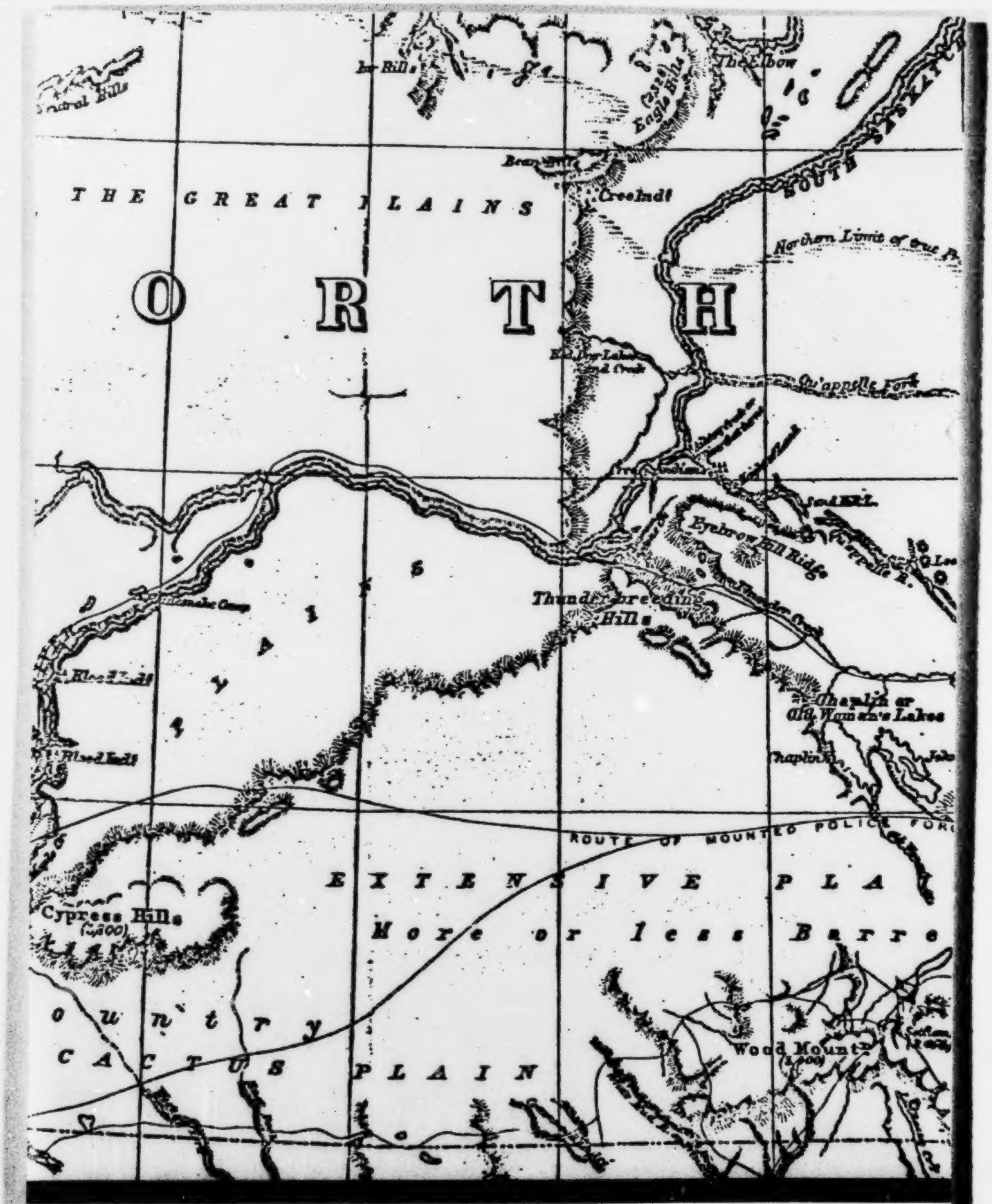

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